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THE REFORM ACT, 1832

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THE REFORM ACT, 1832

THE CORRESPONDENCE

OF THE LATE

EARL GREY

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WITH

HIS MAJESTY KING WILLIAM IV.

AND WITH

SIR HERBERT TAYLOR

RR 9-

FROM NOV. 1830 TO JUNE 1832

EDITED BY HENRY EARL GREY

In Two Vols.—Vol. II.

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THE
CORRESPONDENCE OF EARL GREY
WITH
KING WILLIAM IV.

No. 266.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Dec. 2, 1831.

MY DEAR LORD,—The King having given full consideration to your Lordship's letter of the 30th ult., and the accompanying memorandum of Lord Wharncliffe, with your marginal notes, orders me to express, in the first instance, his sincere regret that a negotiation, so fairly begun, and conducted in a spirit of conciliation, which appears to have been mutual and sincere, and which was directed to an object so essential, should have been broken off by the communication from Lord Wharncliffe, which is quoted in the P.S. of your Lordship's letter, at a moment when His Majesty had hoped that the presence of Lord Harrowby would have promoted, rather than impeded, the desired understanding.

Although, however, Lord Wharncliffe has stated that 'the alterations which you propose to make in your new measure are not of sufficient importance to form a basis for any previous understanding between the parties as to the course to be pursued in the progress of that measure, His Majesty is disposed to view what has passed as calculated to be useful, and does not see why advantage should not be taken of the knowledge which has been thus obtained of the sentiments, or of the disposition to concede, so far as it goes, of some of the opponents of the Bill, to introduce such alterations or modifications as may remove obstacles, without affecting the principle, or the efficiency of the measure; nor why again that which had occurred to your Lordship, or had been suggested by others, in the course of this discussion on the merits of the Bill, and its provisions, as being improvements, or even as tending to reconcile objections, should not be adopted and brought forward, if it should not be at variance with the principle, and should not in your opinion injure the efficiency of the Bill. Although the alterations, or modifications which may result, may not meet the views and expectations of Lords Wharncliffe and Harrowby, and those acting with them, they may, in His Majesty's conception, strike others as more important; or they may afford a plea of which many may be glad to avail themselves, for *discovering* differences between the old Bill and the new one, which shall, *in their opinion*, be sufficient to convert the previous dissent into assent; and they will, at any rate, remove all reasonable ground for the imputation, that there is a determination not to abandon any particle of the Bill, although the sacrifice might be made, without essential departure from the principle of it.

Your Lordship will observe, that the King lays great stress upon the adherence to principle and efficiency; and His Majesty does so, not only because he admits, as he originally did, that these are indispensable features of the measure, but because he knows that you attach a paramount importance to those features, and that you have pledged yourself not to depart, in the slightest degree, from the principle. Nevertheless His Majesty conceives that inconvenience and difficulty may have arisen from too minute a dissection of the principle, and from applying it to the details in such a degree, as to render it subservient to them, instead of the details being subordinate to the principle.

It appears to His Majesty that the *principle* of the Bill is concentrated in the words, *Reform of Parliament*, and that the principal features of this again are disfranchisement and enfranchisement, and such extension and regulation of the elective franchise as shall render the representation more equal and general, and less liable to undue influence and abuse. So long as these main features are borne in view, and that due attention is paid to the efficiency of the proposed Reform, the details may, in His Majesty's opinion, be altered and modified without thereby affecting the principle of the Bill, or departing from the pledge to preserve it inviolate; and His Majesty has perceived with satisfaction in your Lordship's recent communications, that this opinion is not altogether at variance with your own, and is in some degree borne out by the alterations which you have shown a disposition to introduce, and which appear to him essential improvements, although they may not meet the ideas of Lord Wharncliffe, nor even those of some of your Lordship's colleagues.

The King has ordered me to notice, first, what is stated in your Lordship's letter; next, Lord Wharncliffe's memorandum, at the risk of repetition, it being his wish that you should be in full possession of his sentiments, and that they should be conveyed to you in the same unreserved manner in which yours have been imparted to His Majesty.

1st. As to the exclusion of freeholders in towns from the right of voting in counties. His Majesty agrees with you in considering the proposition inadmissible and inconsistent with the general principle of the Bill, though he does not think it would be advisable to lay too much stress upon the objection, that it would take away from the individual the right which he actually enjoys, *without any compensation or equivalent*, as this might be applied to the case of others, whose property and alleged rights are affected by the Bill.

2nd. The metropolitan districts. His Majesty had objected, as others have, but he subscribes to the impossibility of now altering this provision of the Bill, and he trusts that the inconvenience of too large a constituency will be obviated by the conditions proposed to be attached to the vote of the occupier of a 10*l.* house.

3rd. His Majesty considers that you have, on grounds of policy, judged wisely in giving up the idea of transferring a portion of the boroughs from Schedule B. to Schedule A.; and he has no doubt that the objection to the union of some of the boroughs in the middle of

Schedule B. are well founded. But His Majesty is very much pleased with the plan of taking the eleven highest boroughs out of Schedule B. altogether, as including the county towns, the disfranchisement of which he also has always been inclined to consider objectionable. Nor does His Majesty see the objection in practice, while the measure would be quite consistent with the principle, to give two votes to the largest towns, which by the late Bill had only one member; or the proposed number of twenty-three, including one to Chatham and one to the county of Monmouth (that is to say, the ten proposed as second members to large towns), might be partly made up by giving additional members to the largest towns, and additional members to the largest counties which have not, in the former Bill, been so considered; thereby, at all events, and in either way, restoring the numbers of the House of Commons, and shutting out the claim of Ireland to more members.

His Majesty enters cordially into the reasons which your Lordship gives for inclining to this proposition, and, notwithstanding the objections which have been made to it, and what is stated in your P.S., His Majesty hopes you will adhere to it; at any rate, that you will not abandon the intention of taking the eleven highest boroughs out of Schedule B.

This alteration, the *very essential* one, which will be produced by substituting for the criterion of population a combined one of houses and taxation, which goes to the establishment of the principle on which the King from the first laid so much stress, *that it should be a representation of property as well as of numbers*, and the adoption of the census of 1831 instead of that of 1821, which His Majesty had also early urged as being most equitable, will, he trusts, have considerable effect in disarming the opposition to the Bill, and cannot, in his opinion, lay your Lordship open to the imputation of having departed from the principle of the Bill.

Your Lordship's letter and my answer to it embrace so much the essential parts of Lord Wharncliffe's memorandum, that it is almost unnecessary that I should trouble you with many more words on the subject.

The number of representatives for London and Westminster and adjoining districts, adverting to the extent and the wealth of the population, does not appear to His Majesty too great. The character of a large portion of the constituency, from the local operation of the rate of qualification, was the objection which appeared to him to call for attention, and against this your Lordship has endeavoured to guard.

His Majesty does not understand the peculiar occasion of the objection to Brighton and Cheltenham being represented, unless —— shall view them as places of luxury and dissipation, which should not be countenanced and encouraged. The great amount of population is certainly fluctuating, but there is a resident population in each quite sufficient to establish a claim to be represented.

There appears to His Majesty some force in Lord Wharncliffe's observation as to the preponderance which the manufacturing interest may obtain over the agricultural interest, from the counties of York, Lancaster, Stafford, &c., receiving additional county members, as well as representatives for the large towns which abound in them; but his Majesty does not see how this can be remedied without abandoning the principle of representing numbers as well as property. The principle appears, however, to have been departed from, or rather inadvertently broken in upon, by the operation of the provision which fixes a 10*l.* householding as the universal qualification, and on which Lord Wharncliffe next observes. It cannot be denied that it has the effect of excluding from the right of voting many householders of greater respectability than those who may obtain it from local situation and contingencies. Whether this could have been obviated in the first instance, His Majesty does not pretend to judge; though he conceives that considerable difficulty would have been found in determining the relative value of the tenement and respectability of the householder in large and small towns, so as to apply the regulation generally, and upon any principle invariably admissible. But he is satisfied of the embarrassment which would result from any attempt now to introduce this alteration in the Bill.

The King is aware that many persons, whose opinions are deserving of attention, think it would have been advisable to give a *double* representation to every place, and to reduce accordingly the number of places represented; but His Majesty, without giving any opinion on this point, admits that it is too late to entertain the proposition.

His Majesty does not see the advantage of dividing the Bill into three Bills, as proposed by Lord Wharncliffe: on the contrary, he conceives that it might have the effect of extending the discussion, and of paving the way for renewed objections and opposition. I beg to return Lord Wharncliffe's papers, and have, &c.

H. TAYLOR.

P. S.—I had received very full instructions from the King for this letter, and His Majesty having read it with great attention, orders me to add that he approves of every part of it, and that it conveys correctly what he intended to say.

No. 267.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

Downing Street, Dec. 3, 1831.

My dear Sir,—This accompanies a very long letter to the King, comprehending an answer to those which I have received both from His Majesty and from you to-day.

I am not sure that I have stated quite distinctly the objections (I think I did so in my former letter), which Lords Palmerston and Melbourne felt to the proposed alteration in Schedule B. It was not in fact to the reduction of the numbers of that schedule, but to the counterpoise which was proposed by giving ten additional members to the large towns; and I conceived the two propositions to be so identified, as I could not have consented to one without the other, or rather to the first without the second, that I spoke of the alteration of Schedule B. as the shortest way, after the explanation which had before been given, of describing the whole proposed arrangement.

* * * * *

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 268.

Earl Grey to the King.

Downing Street, Dec. 3, 1831.

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Earl Grey begs leave to offer to your Majesty his best thanks for the communication of your Majesty's sentiments on what has lately passed between Earl Grey and Lord Wharncliffe on the subject of the Reform Bill; and to express the high gratification he has derived from the near correspondence of your Majesty's opinions with his own. Earl Grey is still of opinion that the proposed plan of taking eleven boroughs from Schedule B. would have been a great improvement of the measure; but when the objections to it were so strongly felt by Lord Palmerston and Lord Melbourne (Lord J. Russell also dissenting from a change in Schedule B.), and finding also that the opposition of those who before objected to the Bill was more likely to be increased than diminished by such an arrangement, Earl Grey felt, as he before stated to your Majesty, that as a question of expediency it might be better to relinquish it. This matter, however, is still open for reconsideration, and in any further discussion that may take place upon it, Earl Grey will not fail to urge anew the reasons in its favour which have met with your Majesty's approbation. On the other points adverted to in Earl Grey's letter to Sir Herbert Taylor, your Majesty has come so nearly to the same conclusions as Earl Grey, that he does not think it necessary at present to trouble your Majesty further upon them. He would only remark upon Lord Wharncliffe's observation, that the representatives of manufacturing counties will not be of the landed interest; that Mr. Littleton's return for Staffordshire, Lord Stanley's for Lancashire, and those which have been uniformly made for Yorkshire, notwithstanding the overwhelming influence of the West Riding, with the single exception of Mr. Marshall, and that was chiefly owing to his wealth and to his connecting himself with Lord Milton, prove practically that there is not much ground for this apprehension. The difference of qualification in large and small towns was repeatedly and carefully discussed, and the reasons in favour of it were not overlooked; but it was felt that such a distinction would leave a constant cause of complaint, injurious to the final settlement which it is so desirable to effect. There only remains, on this subject, the assurance which Earl Grey is anxious to repeat, that in all the subordinate provisions of the Bill, preserving entire its principle and its efficiency, there has been and still is on his part the most anxious desire to do every thing that may tend to remove all reasonable objections.

A long deliberation on the rough draft of the Speech, which by yesterday's post Earl Grey had the honour of submitting to your Majesty, took place in the Cabinet last night, and Earl Grey had the satisfaction of finding that it was entirely approved by his colleagues. It will still require revision; and Earl Grey continues to be of opinion, that the paragraph respecting Portugal must undergo some alteration. It will also be necessary to introduce a paragraph noticing the conclusion of the convention with France for the right of mutual search, with a view to the suppression of the Slave Trade, which was received last night.

The Cabinet is to meet upon the Speech again tomorrow at three, when Earl Grey hopes to be in possession of your Majesty's observations upon it.

Earl Grey cannot conclude without offering to your Majesty his humble thanks for the kind indulgence with which your Majesty has been pleased to receive his late communications, and for the unreserved expression of your Majesty's feelings and opinions upon them. This gracious confidence, as it is his best support and encouragement, will also afford to Earl Grey the best means of serving your Majesty usefully in the important trust with which your Majesty has been pleased to honour him.

All which, &c. GREY.

No. 269.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Dec. 3, 1831.

My dear Lord,—I have had the honour of laying before the King your Lordship's letter of yesterday and the accompanying rough draft of the Speech which you had prepared for the consideration of the Cabinet. His

Majesty has ordered me to put down in pencil three or four verbal alterations which occurred to him; and viewing it as a first draft subject to the more general alterations and amendments which your Lordship may, after communication with your colleagues, consider advisable, His Majesty does not hesitate to communicate his remarks upon its general features.

Considering that Parliament has been called together earlier than was expected, at a period very inconvenient to a great proportion of the Members of both Houses, and when their continued presence in the country would, on many accounts, be desirable, His Majesty conceives that an expression of regret, that he had been under the necessity of disturbing them at this season, after their very recent and protracted attendance, would be gracious and well timed.

His Majesty also thinks, that the Speech might be more condensed; and that, by a different arrangement or distribution of the matter, the subjects might be better connected. He thinks that, in noticing the appearance of the cholera, and the necessity of adopting precautionary measures, much stress might be laid upon the advantage which would be derived from the improvement in the condition of the poor by the encouragement of better habits of cleanliness, temperance, and regularity, the absence of which had been shown greatly to increase the danger of the disease; and that it would be advisable not to admit, that the distress of the labouring classes of the community arises so much from the failure of sources of industry, as from the interruptions which have, from various causes, taken place in the regular and sober pursuit of the occupations from which those classes derive their support. This His Majesty verily believes to be the case, and a principal cause of the distress; and your Lordship will, He thinks, best judge how far it may be practicable and advisable to *combine* the notice of both, so as to soften the one, without giving too much importance to the other.

Your Lordship will observe the proposed substitution of the word *Established* for *Protestant* Church, which occurred to His Majesty, from a belief that *established* has been the term generally used heretofore, and that the change of it, upon this occasion, might attract notice. If, however, His Majesty be mistaken in his recollection of former usages, his objection will of course fall to the ground. He highly approves of the succeeding paragraph, as calling the attention of the Irish people to blessings which they have never yet duly appreciated, nor taken advantage of.

In reference to the causes of unfriendly intercourse with Portugal, His Majesty conceives that it would be advisable to lay some stress upon the unceasing outrages and vexations committed by its Government against British subjects, as well as upon the differences between the Princes of the House of Braganza, lest it should be inferred that the former had hitherto been a mere plea, advanced for the purpose of covering designs entertained in favour of the party opposed to Don Miguel, and to be carried into effect when occasion should serve.

His Majesty highly approves of the concluding paragraph, but would be glad if the words *Political Unions* could be introduced, as he does not wish to disguise his hostility to them, and his opinion of their unconstitutional character.

I have procured the 'Standard' of the 1st inst., and read the leading article to the King, who was shocked and disgusted with it, as I was. It is, however, so violent, so bitter, so unjust and coarse, that it carries with it its own antidote.

His Majesty ordered me to observe, that what is said in this vile paragraph of the Duke of Wellington's 'remonstrance' having suggested the Proclamation, &c., tends to confirm His Majesty's apprehension that such would have been the inference from any delay in his reply, and from his not stating (as it did very civilly) that the communication of his Grace's caution or advice was superfluous.

The King will be very glad to see and converse with Captain Lyons, and rejoices that you and Lord Palmerston mean to urge his return to the coast of Greece, which His Majesty had already recommended to Sir James Graham, in consequence of what your Lordship had previously said.

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His Majesty has ordered me to mention to your Lordship, that he yesterday gave an audience to Lord Chandos, who had requested to see His Majesty on the subject of the West Indies, to which their conversation was almost entirely confined, and with respect to which His Majesty desired him to communicate with Lord Goderich. He entered however, generally, into the excited as well as the distressed state of the country, and stated also his knowledge of Lord Wharncliffe's communications with your Lordship, though without appearing to know the particulars, or the progress and result.

He afterwards volunteered speaking to me more fully on the question of Reform, and expressed his desire, as well as that of many others acting with him, that some understanding could be brought about. I asked why he did not express this feeling to some member of the Government. He replied that he was little acquainted with any except Lord Goderich and Lord Palmerston, and that the latter had not, for some time past, encouraged the intercourse. It was evident however, from what he proceeded to say on some of the provisions of the Bill, particularly on the 10*l.* qualification and the addition to the metropolitan representatives, that, by understanding, he meant concessions on these and other points. I heard what he had to say without of course giving any opinion, merely expressing a wish that a question which so agitates the country might be brought to a speedy and satisfactory termination. I should add that his language was quite free from violence.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 270.

The King to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Dec. 4, 1831.

Although the King will have the pleasure of seeing Earl Grey at St. James's to-morrow, His Majesty will not omit to acknowledge the receipt of his letter of yesterday.

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The King assures Earl Grey that he has received with sincere interest his several communications on the subject of the Reform Bill, and that he has derived much satisfaction from their full and unreserved character. His Majesty rejoices to find that Earl Grey clings, as he does, to the proposed plan of taking the eleven boroughs from Schedule B.; or at least that he maintains his opinion that it would be a great improvement of the measure; and His Majesty trusts that facilities may yet offer for effecting it, particularly if, in the course of the discussion, this alteration should appear to be agreeable to some of the opponents, and calculated to obtain the assent of one portion, although others may persist in their objection.

This is a point upon which Earl Grey will of course use his discretion; and His Majesty is persuaded that he will avoid saying anything that can have the effect of curtailing a discretion so essential, as it applies to this point, as well as to all subordinate provisions of the Bill.

His Majesty clearly understands from Earl Grey's letter of yesterday to Sir Herbert Taylor, that the objection of Lords Palmerston and Melbourne is not to the reduction of the numbers of Schedule B., but to the giving additional members to the large towns; and he also comprehends the principle on which the objection is made; but he owns that he attaches so much importance to restoring the double representation to the county towns, that he had not felt any hesitation on agreeing to the proposed counterpoise.

The King is quite alive to the difficulty and embarrassment which would have arisen from a difference of qualification in large and small towns, both in the early establishment of the difference, and in progress, as the value of local interests and property must, in this commercial and speculative country, be subject to continual fluctuations. But this affords one of the proofs of the difficulty of applying any fixed principle, bearing equally on all parts, to ameliorations of a great machine; and shows that the proposed remedy may often prove as defective in that respect as the part for which it is substituted.

The King is not surprised to learn that the proposed Speech had been entirely approved by Earl Grey's colleagues, although His Majesty had been induced, after much and attentive consideration, to suggest, and to direct Sir Herbert Taylor to communicate, some remarks which had occurred to him, as these, even if Earl Grey should consider it advisable to adopt them, would not occasion any essential alteration. Indeed, with the exception of that which applies to the paragraph relating to Portugal, to which His Majesty attaches some importance, the suggestions may be viewed as superfluous; and Earl Grey will consider them as arising more out of the unreserved and confidential character of the communication which has been established between them, than out of any desire to press his own ideas upon him. WILLIAM R.

No. 271.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Dec. 4, 1831.

My dear Lord,—The King has so fully answered your Lordship's letter to him, and that which you addressed to me, as the subjects are connected, that it is unnecessary that I should trouble you with much more than the acknowledgment of it.

I shall only add that His Majesty has taken a very warm interest in every thing that you have communicated, and that He has frequently expressed the satisfaction he derives from the character of the intercourse which has been established between him and his Government, and particularly your Lordship.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 272.

The King to Earl Grey.

St. James's Palace, Dec. 6, 1831.
Half-past 10 P.M.

The King returns to Earl Grey the proposed answer to the House of Lords, which he entirely approves.

The account of the debate in the House of Lords as given by the Earl Grey of this night, has afforded His Majesty great satisfaction, and shows the excellence and discretion of the Speech. WILLIAM R.

No. 273.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

St. James's, Dec. 9, 1831.

My dear Lord,—I have just time to say before starting that the Archbishop was out of town, but that His

Majesty has ordered me to invite him to the Pavilion for a couple of nights next week.

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I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 274.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

Downing Street, Dec. 9, 1831.

My dear Sir,—I have received your note of this morning, and am very glad that the King has invited the Archbishop of Canterbury to Brighton. I am sure an expression of the King's opinion of the importance of settling the Reform question as soon as possible, and of the danger which would attend a second rejection of the measure by the House of Lords, will have the most beneficial effect in that quarter.

I enclose an extract from the settlement of the late Queen Charlotte relating to the houses which were settled upon Her Majesty, by which you will perceive that she had the power of letting or even selling her interest in them, if, after the King's death, she had been disposed to leave the kingdom.

Before a similar clause is inserted in the settlement of the dower of Her present Majesty, as the King once mentioned this matter to me, I am anxious to have His Majesty's opinion upon it; and I shall be obliged to you to submit this matter to His Majesty for his consideration. In doing so I hope that it is unnecessary for me to guard myself against the suspicion of feeling any distrust of Her present Majesty, or of wishing to subject her to any limitations that were not imposed on her royal predecessor; but the increased jealousy of the public as to all matters of this nature, requires that they should be very carefully considered.

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I am, &c. GREY.

No. 275.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Dec. 10, 1831.

My dear Lord,—The King has ordered me to thank your Lordship for your communication on the subject of the settlement of the late Queen Charlotte relating to the houses which were settled upon Her Majesty, and by which she had the power of letting, or even selling, her interest in them, if, after the King's death, she had been disposed to leave the kingdom.

His Majesty was not aware of this clause in the grant (nor was I, although an executor and administrator under Her Majesty's will); but he is decidedly of opinion that it ought not, *at any time*, to have been introduced in a grant of Crown property, as a provision for the life of a surviving Queen; and His Majesty does not hesitate in saying, that he cannot sanction in the grant to his Queen, a clause which appears to him so objectionable.

His Majesty has not named the subject to the Queen, nor does he consider it necessary to do so, although satisfied that she would take the same view of it that he does.

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I hope that His Majesty's conversation with the Archbishop of Canterbury may produce a good effect; and he has authorised me to speak, in the same sense, to the Bishop of Worcester when he comes here at Christmas.

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I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 276.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

Downing Street, Dec. 12, 1831.

My dear Sir,—I have to acknowledge your letter of the 10th. I anticipated the opinion of His Majesty on the clause in Queen Charlotte's settlement, and have, in obedience to His Majesty's command, given directions to have the Queen's settlement so framed as to be free from this objection.

I had a meeting on Saturday with Lords Chandos, Harrowby, and Wharncliffe, at which the Chancellor and Lord Althorp were present, on the Reform Bill. The discussion was on the same points, and terminated in the same manner as that with Lord Wharncliffe. Agreeing to the most material points of the principle of the late measure, and the new Bill containing so many important alterations, I cannot help hoping, though I must say there was nothing in their language to encourage such a hope, that they may yet see the expediency of not opposing the measure on the second reading in the House of Lords.

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I am, &c. GREY

No. 277.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Dec. 12, 1831.

My dear Lord,—I have the honour to enclose for your Lordship's information a letter, which I received about three o'clock this day, from Lord Chandos, and a copy of my answer sent by the bearer, who returned in less than an hour.

The King was out, but I have since submitted these documents to His Majesty, and he approved of my sending them to you.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 278.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Dec. 13, 1831.

My dear Lord,

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Your Lordship will have learnt from my letter of yesterday, that I had been apprised by Lord Chandos of the meeting on Saturday on the Reform Bill, and of its result. I own that I had anticipated that result from what Lord Chandos had said to me; but I am certain your Lordship would have considered me as acting injudiciously if I had discouraged any disposition shown to accommodation. I shall be anxious to know what has been the impression made by the alterations you had determined upon in the Bill, and I should hope they would be sufficient to those at least who want a plea. The Archbishop will come here on Thursday and stay until Saturday.

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I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 279.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

Downing Street, Dec. 13, 1831.

My dear Sir,—I have just received your letter of yesterday, with the accompanying correspondence between you and Lord Chandos, which I return.

My letter of yesterday will have conveyed to you the same account of the interview which took place here, and of its result as is given by Lord Chandos. The only difference which I have to mark with respect to the circumstances stated in his letter, is in the preliminary steps; there was no *negotiation depending.* I could not indeed, in my view of the matter, describe what had taken place between Lord Wharncliffe and me as a *negotiation*; still less could I assent to our communications, of whatever description they might be, being understood to have proceeded upon the principle of *compromise and mutual concession.* I certainly could in no case have entered into any discussion upon the Reform Bill, except upon the ground expressly admitted by Lord Wharncliffe, of my obligation to maintain the principle and efficiency of the measure. This being admitted I was, and still am, ready to listen in a conciliatory spirit to any proposal which might be made to remove objections to the particular provisions by which the principle was to be carried into effect.

But when we came to the discussion, though the alterations we have made were such as I thought might have afforded facilities for agreeing to the second reading at least, so much was demanded as to some of the most important features of the measure, that it was impossible for the Government to accede to it without forfeiting all claim to public confidence, with the power of bringing this matter to a speedy and satisfactory settlement. If the concessions demanded of us were not concessions of principle, the refusal of them does not seem to justify an opposition to the second reading, on which the principle of the measure is the chief subject for consideration.

The Chancellor, though not present at the beginning of the interview, came afterwards, which I mention only as from your answer to Lord Chandos you seem to have understood that he was not present at all. I did not know, owing to a mistake, till after the discussion was over, that Lord Chandos wished Lord Palmerston to be a party to it. I should otherwise have been most happy, as you must know, to have had Lord Palmerston's assistance. Indeed I should have asked him to be present in the first instance, had it not been that I thought it material, for obvious reasons, that the Chancellor and Lord Althorp should be with me, and that I did not like to exceed the number of those who were to meet me. As I know the King will receive from Lord Althorp a full account of the debate last night in the House of Commons, I do not think it necessary to take up your time on a subject on which he is so much better qualified to give all necessary information. I only say, therefore, that the general tone and result of the discussion is reported to me to have been very satisfactory. The opposition of Lord Clive, Lord Chandos, &c., was of a mitigated, and almost of a conciliatory, character; that of Sir R. Peel in a tone of increased bitterness, making all the alterations in the Bill, though acknowledging that they were improvements, the subject of taunts against the Ministers for having been obliged to give way to the objections of their opponents. This was not the course which I and others took upon the more notable change in Sir R. Peel's conduct on the Catholic Bill.

You will see in the 'Morning Herald' the account of a revolution in Spain, which appears to me quite incredible, from some circumstances in the statement, and of which no information whatever, that I have heard of, has reached any department of the Government.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 280.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Dec. 14, 1831.

My dear Lord,—The King, to whom I have had the honour of submitting your Lordship's letter of yesterday, expressed himself perfectly sensible of the difference which you point out in Lord Chandos's statement, and the circumstances which led to and formed the basis of the interview in Downing Street; that it could not be called the renewal of a *negotiation*; and that you had always declined to admit that your communications with the opponents of the Bill had proceeded upon the principle of *compromise and mutual concession.* Lord Chandos had, however, early contemplated this as the basis of what he called the *negotiation*; and I think I mentioned to your Lordship in the first letter in which I noticed his having spoken to me, that by 'understanding' he meant 'concessions.' Nor had he then communicated with Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe, or seen the paper the latter gave you, and learnt your objections to it. However, what has passed has evidently not been useless, if we may judge from the tone of Lord Chandos, Lord Clive, and some others, in the debate of Monday night, and those who have shown this conciliatory feeling, the inclination to smooth difficulties, will, it is to be hoped, not feel indisposed to vote for the second reading, provided no injudicious friend like —— puts a spoke in the wheel.

The King was much pleased with Lord Althorp's account of the debate, and of much of what he read in the newspapers on the subject; and the impression His Majesty has received from this first debate, and all that has passed lately, is, that the measure is in a very good train, in spite of the bitter feeling still evinced by Sir Robert Peel and some others; and he thinks also that the alterations introduced must reconcile many to it. But the King himself still adheres very strongly to his *own* objection to the additional Metropolitan Members, and wishes they could be thrown into the counties in which the districts or parishes are situated.

His Majesty does not give any credit to the report from Spain, and believes it to be a stock-jobbing manœuvre.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 281.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

Downing Street, Dec. 14, 1831.

My dear Sir,—I have received your letter of yesterday.

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If I can trust to the reports which I have received, nothing can be more satisfactory than the feeling with which the new Bill has been generally received. In the City particularly I am assured that it has been decidedly approved; and Mr. Ellice informs me that the Governor of the Bank has declared, not only that he is satisfied with the alterations, but that those with whom he has acted in his endeavour to carry into effect a measure of conciliation in the City ought, if they are consistent in the opinions which they declared at that time, now to concur in assisting the settlement of this great question. On the other hand, I hear that the more eager Reformers, whilst they give full credit to the Government for having fulfilled its promises, are satisfied with the disposition which we have shown, not only to conciliate the opponents of the measure, but with our readiness to remove objections where it was in our power to do so, without departing from its principle, or impairing its efficiency.

The effect in the House of Commons has been all that we could have looked for, with the exception of Sir R. Peel and the Ultra-Tories, whom we could never hope to propitiate, and the Irish Members. The former appears to me to have got into a situation which he could not have contemplated. Reserving any communication of his opinion to others, he does not appear to have been aware of the disposition which had arisen to adopt a more moderate line of conduct; accordingly, when he broke out into a violent attack on the Government, chiefly on the ground of their having made alterations which were calculated to meet the views of their opponents, he found himself, in a great measure, abandoned by Lord Clive and Lord Chandos, and cordially supported only by Sir C. Wetherell and Sir R. Inglis, and persons of that description. This, I say, is a position in which he never can have intended to place himself.

The Irish Members are furious at being shut out from a further addition to their numbers, and threaten to act as a body against the Government. This, if proof were wanting, sufficiently shows the inexpediency of consenting to such an augmentation of Irish representation as they require.

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It can hardly be necessary for me to say, if I have before omitted to do so, that I entirely approve of everything you said to Lord Chandos and of your answer to his letter. The 'Standard,' I hear, affirms that the interview was solicited by me; a statement which can, of course, have received no authority from him.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 282.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Dec. 15, 1831.

My dear Lord,—I have had the honour to submit your Lordship's letter of yesterday to the King, who received with great interest the account it contains of the feeling with which the new Bill has been generally received; and His Majesty hopes that the sentiments which prevail in the City, or rather among the great commercial men, will become generally known.

The first impression in the House of Commons has evidently been as favourable as could possibly have been expected; and there appears no reason to apprehend that it will be weakened in the progress, always excepting the Ultra-Tories and the Irish Members in general, whose threat to act in a body against the Government fully confirms, in His Majesty's opinion, and as you justly observe, the inexpediency of increasing the proportion they bear to the general strength of the House of Commons.

Sir Robert Peel certainly does not seem to have correctly calculated the chances, or perhaps he may have been led astray by temper, or by the influence of others very inferior to him in good sense and judgment, otherwise he must have discovered that he would lose ground by taking a course of opposition, in which he would not be supported by many of the most respectable of his political adherents and friends.

The result has been, upon this question at least, a splitting of parties, which must favour the Government;

and it will be no easy matter for Sir Robert Peel to replace himself in a position which depends so much upon reciprocal and unshaken confidence.

It appears, however, to the King, not improbable that Sir Robert Peel, who has been in a situation to look forward, under any change produced by political or casual circumstances, to be placed at the head of the Government, may look further than the immediate effects of the measure in progress, and may apprehend that the difficulties of carrying on the Government of the country may become much greater than they have been, from the abolition of the means of insuring the return of Ministers and other persons in official situations, who must necessarily have seats in the House of Commons, and also from the diminished influence of the Crown, and therefore of the Government, by the reduction of patronage of every description, and by the transfer of so much of the executive administration to the House of Commons.

His Majesty has often noticed this as an evil which has been some time growing, and he fears it will prove a very serious one for whoever is or may be entrusted with the administration of the affairs of this country. So long as the Government has to carry popular objects, and has not to contend with difficulties which *must* be overcome consistently with the real interest and credit of the country, although they may call for measures which may not be of a popular description, the task will, in His Majesty's opinion, be comparatively easy, and the loss of Government seats and of the influence of a less restricted patronage will not be felt; but questions may arise in which the majority may consider it meritorious, or a better speculation, to take *an independent* course; and His Majesty fears it will then be found that the power of rewarding is a very essential one, and that the Government ought to be able to *command* support to a certain extent. Nor does His Majesty consider this a desideratum, or an object of necessity, for a monarchical government only, or for one of a mixed character, such as that of this country may be called. He considers the observation equally applicable to any and every form of Government, which must be ineffectual if the means be wanting to maintain its consistency, and to place its permanency beyond the reach of attacks which may be levelled against it by the intrigue or faction of a day.

I have endeavoured to express His Majesty's general sentiments, though I fear I may have failed in explaining them correctly. I must repeat that they do not apply to, or arise out of, the question of Reform, but that they are produced by general considerations which have kept pace with the *growth* of the evil. His Majesty has no doubt that the evil will eventually find its remedy, by producing the absolute necessity of restoring the sources of influence, and the power which he conceives to be indispensable to the due and the salutary maintenance of executive authority by any Government.

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I am very glad to hear that your Lordship approved of what I said to Lord Chandos, and of my answer to his letter. It is quite impossible that the 'Standard' should have stated *on his authority* that you had solicited the interview, as I took great care that my communication should be in writing, that, 'He had better address himself direct to you; but if he should prefer an interview with Lord Palmerston (whom he had named to me), I had reason to believe that Lord Palmerston would readily see him, and that he might then place him in communication with your Lordship.' This was in reply to a written communication from him. I had not written or spoken to you when I replied to it, nor could he suppose that I had.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 283.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

Downing Street, Dec. 16, 1831.

My dear Sir,—I have to acknowledge, and only time to acknowledge, the two letters which I have received from you to-day and yesterday.

The effect of the reduction of the patronage of the Government, and the change in the composition of the House of Commons, would require a large discussion.

But in considering this matter you must always take into view the present state of things. From the want of timely correction of many causes of just complaint, the Government has been driven to concessions to public feeling which may undoubtedly be found very inconvenient in future.

But though it may appear somewhat paradoxical to say so, my conviction is, that this inconvenience will be less felt in a reformed House of Commons than it is at present. The effect of a Reform will, I trust, be to restore confidence in that branch of the legislature.

The want of that confidence at this moment is one great cause of its inability to resist popular clamour: at the same time the power of individuals in that House makes the distribution of the patronage of the Crown both irksome to the Government and obnoxious to public opinion.

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But I must conclude, the hour of five being come, when I must go to the House of Lords. I shall be very anxious to hear the result of the Archbishop's visit.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 284.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Dec. 16, 1831.

My dear Lord,—The Archbishop of Canterbury came to dinner yesterday, and leaves the Pavilion to-morrow morning. He had a private interview this morning with the King, who told me that he had stated to him that, although His Majesty was not originally an advocate for Reform of Parliament, he had considered it necessary to yield to the circumstances which had led to the introduction of the present Bill; and that, as matters now stood, and considering the alterations which had been made in that which the House of Lords had rejected in the last Session, he hoped that the provisions of the Bill and the circumstances of the country would be dispassionately considered, and that those who had previously opposed the Bill would not now object to its going into Committee, in which they would have ample opportunities of suggesting what might occur to them; that he did not conceive that they would commit themselves by this course; and that, whatever might be their final decision, they would place themselves in a better position towards the public: That His Majesty thought also that there was reason to hope, from the present temper of the House of Commons, and the importance of bringing the question to a close, which was generally admitted, that the House of Commons would not feel disinclined to agree to any reasonable alterations which the House of Lords might make in the Bill.

The King told me that the Archbishop had expressed himself very mildly on the subject, though very generally; and I should doubt his Grace having committed himself in any way, as to the course he might himself adopt or recommend to others: for, upon leaving the King, he proposed to me to take a walk with him in the afternoon, and we were together more than an hour, during which he rather avoided the subject, which at last I introduced; and although he expressed his apprehensions in general terms, and the uneasiness with which he contemplated the state of the country, and lamented the introduction of a question (though possibly unavoidable) which had increased the excitement, he said nothing from which I could gather whether he would abandon his opposition altogether, or agree to the second reading; nor did he advert *specially* to anything that had passed with the King. The only point on which he dwelt at all, and on which he had gathered that His Majesty agreed with him, was the addition to the metropolitan representation, and to this he expressed his decided objection.

There was, however, nothing in anything he said that betrayed the least disposition to promote opposition, or to produce difficulty.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 285.

Earl Grey to the King.

Downing Street, Dec. 16, 1831.

Earl Grey has the honour of sending for your Majesty's information, lists of the Peers present, and of the speakers in the discussion last night on the Tithe question in the House of Lords.

The motion for a Committee met with no direct objection from anybody except Lord Ellenborough. His speech was in a tone of the bitterest hostility to your Majesty's Ministers, as were those of Lord —— and Lord ——.

In the House of Commons the tone was much more moderate. In both Houses the motions passed without a division, and in the Committee of the House of Lords which met this morning, Earl Grey had the satisfaction of observing in some of the members who are likely to have the greatest influence, and especially in the Bishop of London and Lord Wynford, a disposition to concur in the views of your Majesty's servants as to the measures which will be found most effectual for the settlement of this very pressing and difficult question.

All which, &c. GREY

No. 286.

The King to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Dec. 17, 1831.

The King acknowledges the receipt of Earl Grey's letter of yesterday enclosing lists of the Peers present, and of the speakers in the discussion on the Tithe question on the preceding night; and His Majesty is glad to learn that the motion for a Committee met with no direct opposition, and that Earl Grey had observed in the Committee which met yesterday morning, in some of the most influential members, a disposition to concur in the views of His Majesty's Government on this very important question.

Earl Grey cannot be surprised that some of those who are in habitual opposition to the Government, and who may not be remarkable for command of temper or forbearance of expression upon any occasion, should avail themselves of these opportunities of expressing their hostility; but His Majesty does not consider opposition of this description to be the most formidable.

WILLIAM R.

No. 287.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Dec. 17, 1831.

My dear Lord,—I did not delay submitting to the King the letter which I had the honour of receiving from your Lordship this morning; but it was not in my power to acknowledge the receipt of it by the box which conveyed His Majesty's answer to that addressed to himself.

The King learnt with regret, though without surprise, that Lord —— and Lord —— had been so violent in the debate on Thursday night. The warmth of temper of the latter, and possibly of the former also, would in general account for it; and as to Lord ——, His Majesty had always understood that his disposition is decidedly hostile to the Government.

The debate in the Commons appears to have been conducted by the Opposition with greater moderation. His Majesty is however curious to learn, whether there be any truth in the report which reached him yesterday, that Mr. Sheil meant to move an amendment on the second reading of the Reform Bill, in which he would be supported by the Irish Members in a body.

Nothing further has passed with the Archbishop. I read to the King this morning the copy of the letter I sent to your Lordship last night, and His Majesty observed that I had stated most accurately all he had said to his Grace, as well as the manner in which it had been met. He had only to add that the Archbishop denied having used any influence with the Bench of Bishops, and expressed his belief that there had been no concert between them *as a body*.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 288.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

Downing Street, Dec. 17, 1831.

My dear Sir,—I have this morning had the pleasure of receiving your letter of yesterday.

The result of the Archbishop's visit I still think will prove advantageous; though he does not appear to have said more than in his interview with me. But I have little doubt that the knowledge of the King's opinion, backed as it will be by that of several of his brother Bishops, will have an advantageous effect upon him. He may not vote for the second reading, but I do not think he will vote against it. The only thing I could have wished otherwise in what passed on the part of His Majesty on this occasion, was the Archbishop's having gone away with an impression that the King was adverse to the representation of the metropolitan districts. Notwithstanding His Majesty's original objection to that provision in the Bill, you, in your letter of the 2nd, conveyed to me the opinion of His Majesty in concurrence with my own, that this part of the measure could not now be altered; that the danger of too large a constituency would be obviated by the conditions to be attached to the 10*l.* qualification; and that His Majesty did not think the number of the representatives for London, Westminster, and the adjoining districts, too great for the extent and wealth of the population. I felt great relief from this assurance, under the necessity of persevering in a provision which I knew was exposed to great objections, in which I am afraid the Archbishop may be confirmed by supposing that the King concurs in them.

The debate appears to have gone off very well last night in the House of Commons. Mr. Macaulay again made a most powerful and effective speech. The attacks on the other side were bitter and violent, and Mr. Croker's a tissue of vituperation, without much reference to the question itself. It is hoped that the discussion may end to-night, but I doubt it. In that case the House will adjourn at its rising to the 17th of January. As there was no business before the House, I thought it better to adjourn the House of Lords yesterday, to get rid of the questions with which we were daily tormented.

There is a very afflicting account to-day of another affray on account of Tithes in the county of Kilkenny. The chief constable and sixteen police were killed and wounded, and only three or four of the mob. It is stated that they were attacked in a road with high banks, by about 2,000 people armed with pitchforks, stones, &c., who rushed in and closed with them before they could fire more than ten shots. There must, I think, have been neglect or mismanagement, or want of steadiness and courage in the police.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 289.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Dec. 18, 1831.

My dear Lord,—I have had the honour of receiving your Lordship's letter of yesterday, and of submitting it to the King, who agrees with you that the Archbishop of Canterbury is afraid of committing himself. His Majesty trusts however, after what has passed, that although he may not vote for, he will not vote against, the second reading

With regard to His Majesty's admission to the Archbishop of the objection he entertained to the representation of the metropolitan districts, and which appeared to be that part of the Bill which his Grace chiefly disliked, His Majesty orders me to observe that, although the objection has been weakened by the communications your Lordship had made to him, and by the expedients adopted to obviate the danger of too large a constituency, the impression he had entertained had never been wholly removed, and had been revived or strengthened, since that correspondence, by finding that so many persons concurred in the apprehensions His Majesty had entertained of increased tumults, riots, and disturbance, to which the metropolis would be exposed, from multiplying the opportunities of popular and contested elections, and from extending the scene to quarters which had heretofore in great measure escaped this danger and annoyance.

The King has not any desire or intention to withdraw the opinion, conveyed by his authority in my letter of the 2nd inst., that the number of representatives for London and Westminster and adjoining districts, adverting to the extent and wealth of the population, is not too great, and that you had endeavoured to guard against the objections he felt to this part of the Bill; nor does he wish to cancel his assent to the impossibility of your Lordship's altering this provision of the Bill; but, as before stated, this is now what appears to His Majesty the chief difficulty towards reconciling the great portion of the opponents to the Bill, and the most reasonable objection; and, if this could be removed, His Majesty believes that the opposition in the House of Lords would cease to be serious. With this impression strong upon his mind, it is natural that the sentiment should be betrayed, when the subject is started in conversation such as that which recently took place with the Archbishop, who had been invited here for the express purpose of discussing the general question; or in communication with those who are entitled to the free expression of His Majesty's opinions, as, for instance, Lord John Russell, to whom also His Majesty stated it.

Nor does His Majesty see why the alteration should not be allowed to result from discussion in the progress of the Bill, although the introduction of it in the new Bill by its framers, under your Lordship's authority, would have been impossible. He cannot admit it to be a decided feature of the *principle* to the maintenance of which you are pledged; but he conceives it to be one of those subordinate details, which may be altered and improved, as others, more essential and more nearly allied to the principle, have been altered and improved, without subjecting your Lordship to the imputation of having departed from the principle, or of having diminished the efficiency of the measure.

I have read these remarks to the King, who orders me to say that they are in close adherence to his instructions.

His Majesty learnt with great satisfaction from Lord Althorp this morning, the result of the adjourned debate in the House of Commons on the second reading. He did not expect it would close so soon, nor that the majority would be so great, as he thought the Irish members would be restive. The line taken by —— does not surprise the King, as he never gave him credit for judgment, or discretion, or good taste, and considers him to *want ballast* more than most men, and these are deficiencies which are not compensated by extensive information, quick parts, and a lively imagination.

His Majesty highly approves of your Lordship having adjourned the House of Lords on the 16th, and he considers the respite to be on every ground desirable. He had noticed with great concern the distressing account of the disastrous affray in the county of Kilkenny on account of Tithes, which however offers, in his opinion, additional proof of the necessity of some very efficient step to remedy this evil. Mr. O'Connell appears to be stirring the fire, and I fear that you will be called upon for more troops in Ireland, as the example of violence, and especially if it has been successful, is always contagious in that inflammable population.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 290.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

East Sheen, Dec. 19, 1831.

My dear Sir,—I have to offer you my best thanks for your letters of the 17th and 18th. It is certainly true that the representation of the London districts cannot be strictly said to be inseparable from the principle of the Bill. In this view of the matter, then, it ought not to influence the votes of those who object to it on the second reading, it being a matter of detail which may be considered in the Committee.

But you are aware of the importance of these districts, from their population, wealth, and influence; and consequently must perceive the embarrassment which might arise from the disappointment of so large a class of the community, which operates so powerfully in giving a tone to public opinion.

That the Government cannot, in the first instance, agree to an alteration in this provision of the Bill, is admitted. It may be carried against them, and they may submit to an alteration which they could not have proposed. But might not this expose them to the imputation of conniving at their own defeat? And if the Opposition should succeed on this point, might it not lead to success on others, which in the aggregate might so far alter the character and efficiency of the Bill as to make it impossible for us to go on with it. If this should happen, a state of things would be produced not less disastrous than the rejection of the Bill on the second reading.

With all humility therefore, and with all the deference which I owe to the King's opinion, feeling confident that this representation of the metropolis, which His Majesty admits not to be disproportionate to its extent and opulence, will not be found practically exposed to the evils which are apprehended from it, I cannot help fearing that the Archbishop's knowledge of the King's opinion on this matter may produce a good deal of difficulty in the Committee. His Grace, I am sure, is incapable of making an improper use of anything that may have passed confidentially with His Majesty. But these things seldom fail to get out; they are first imparted confidentially; that confidence is extended; hints are given; exaggerations succeed; and, at last, the most confident misstatements (as has happened more than once during the progress of this business) of His Majesty's sentiments are circulated, and readily believed by all who wish them to be true,

Perhaps I have been led to dwell more upon this subject than I otherwise should have done, by the anxiety which I feel with respect to the future divisions upon this vital question in the House of Lords. In ordinary times the general and lasting, and intense feeling of the public, after so much discussion, and so long an interval for consideration, and the increased majority in the House of Commons, would have been decisive: this is now more than doubtful. Triumphant as the last division was, Sir G. Warrender was the only convert. Upon the most sanguine estimate that I can make of the effects to be expected from the causes which I have stated, there will still be a majority against the Bill. Even those who are inclined to vote for the second reading, vacillating and undecided, are too likely in the end to have their conduct guided by those who have more energy and determination, and who, I am sorry to say, see no object before them but that which may lead to a triumph over the Ministers, in their eagerness to obtain which all other considerations are overlooked.

This view of the case, I confess, depresses my spirits in the midst of all the congratulations I receive on the favourable course of events since Parliament met; and the means of averting the evils which I fear will infallibly result from another and more severe disappointment of the public expectation, are the subject of my constant thoughts by night and by day.

It gave me great pleasure to hear that the King had approved the sentiments which I expressed respecting Mr. O'Connell. You will have observed that this gentleman's conduct became the subject of some discussion in the House of Lords; and I thought it the best way to state the whole truth frankly, and without reserve, that I should have been glad, had it been possible, to attach a man whose influence and whose talents were so great, to the cause of good government, that no offer of any place had been made to him, and that none would be made after the conduct which he had again thought proper to pursue.

What has happened in Kilkenny entirely proves the necessity of an arrangement respecting Tithes; but this unfortunately, like other questions of the same nature, has been delayed too long. But what appears to me most indispensable to the peace and safety of Ireland is the attaching, by some provision, the Catholic priesthood to the Government of the country. For this, in some respects, the moment is favourable; as the leaders of that Church are, at least some of the most powerful of them, at variance with O'Connell; and they must perceive, though he may avail himself of their assistance to pull down the Protestant Church, that the re-establishment of the former power and influence of the Catholic Church is the last thing in his contemplation. I have, therefore, reason to believe that the moment would not be unpropitious for an arrangement.

But then the first step that was taken for this purpose, the whole of the Orange party would be out upon us as enemies of the Established Church, and intending to substitute a Catholic Church in its stead.

You will have seen that we have been already accused of this, both in speeches and resolutions, at the late meeting of the Protestant Association in Dublin.

But it is really time that I should finish; but I must add more distinctly what I hinted at in my letter to the King, that I shall be anxious, about the beginning of the next month, when all the circumstances of our present situation shall have been fully considered by the Cabinet, to be allowed an opportunity of laying our opinion of them, in person, fully before the King.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 291.

Earl Grey to the King.

East Sheen, Dec. 10, 1831.

Earl Grey humbly craves your Majesty's pardon for not having sooner acknowledged your Majesty's most gracious letter of the 17th, for which he trusts your Majesty will be pleased to make allowance on account of the constant and multifarious occupations of the last few days, and there not being anything which made it immediately necessary for him to trouble your Majesty.

Earl Grey anticipated the satisfaction which the division in the House of Commons would afford your Majesty; the debate was not less triumphant than the division, and Mr. Stanley distinguished himself more than ever. He exposed all the fallacies, and completely destroyed the effect of Mr. Croker's speech; and the impression left by him upon the House was so strong, that Sir R. Peel could do nothing against it.

If the effect of this should be to convince a majority of the House of Lords of the inexpediency of offering a further opposition to the Bill, it will be most fortunate for the country. If, on the contrary, now that the public expectation has been raised to a higher pitch than ever, the new Bill should be rejected, the consequences may be most calamitous.

To avert these, it will be the duty of your Majesty's Ministers to apply themselves most earnestly to the consideration of a state of things which, under any supposition except that of the general expression of public opinion, and the decisive majority of the House of Commons, producing on the House of Lords the effect which, in all former times, would have been certain, present on every side difficulties and dangers of the most serious nature; and Earl Grey ventures to express his hope that your Majesty will allow him an opportunity, before Parliament re-assembles, of laying personally before your Majesty all the considerations which must determine the conduct to be pursued in a situation of affairs more delicate and more difficult than any that has occurred even in the eventful period of the last thirty years.

Earl Grey begs leave to offer to your Majesty his grateful acknowledgments for the kind intentions which influenced your Majesty's late communication with the Archbishop of Canterbury. He cannot but lament the weakness and indecision which appear to be the prevailing features in his Grace's character, and which are too likely to make him act ultimately in obedience to the dictates of those, whose hostility to the Administration seems to make them overlook the dangers which their success might bring upon the country. If Earl Grey ventured to express some regret at your Majesty's having disclosed to the Archbishop of Canterbury your disapprobation of the elective franchise to the metropolitan districts, it was only from a fear that this knowledge might produce effects in the progress of the measure, which might prove extremely embarrassing to the Government.

All which, &c. GREY.

No. 292.

The King to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Dec. 22, 1831.

The King received yesterday Earl Grey's letter dated on the 19th inst., and he assures him that he is too well aware of his unceasing and multifarious occupations to require his excuses for not immediately acknowledging His Majesty's letters.

Earl Grey's report of the manner in which Mr. Stanley distinguished himself in the debate on last Saturday night, and exposed the fallacies of Mr. Croker's speech, confirms the accounts which His Majesty had received from other quarters, and he cannot but hope that the character and result of this discussion in the House of Commons, added to other circumstances of recent occurrence, will have a salutary effect upon the proceedings in Committee, and upon the subsequent consideration of the question in the House of Lords.

The King is quite alive to the importance which attaches to a satisfactory issue of this critical question, and to the many serious consequences which would attend the rejection of the new Bill, and he trusts that the feeling which may be shown when it is again introduced in the House of Lords, will be such as to dissipate the uneasiness which Earl Grey appears to feel at this moment, and which His Majesty admits to be very natural at the eve of a struggle, upon the issue of which so much of the general interest and the peace of the country would seem to depend. Nor can he otherwise than concur in the wisdom of being prepared for the event which it is so desirable to avert, and in the propriety and necessity of his Ministers applying themselves, during the present interval, most earnestly to the consideration of a state of things which may become pregnant with extreme difficulty and danger, and may require to be treated with great delicacy and circumspection.

His Majesty will be glad to receive Earl Grey before

Parliament re-assembles (and indeed he trusts he need not say that he will be glad to see him at any and all times); and he will be ready to enter into whatever Earl Grey may consider it necessary and expedient to submit to him, with an earnest and cordial desire to maintain the claim which he flatters himself he has established to the confidence of Earl Grey and his other servants, and to do justice to the duties and the obligations which his own station imposes upon him.

His Majesty would much regret that Earl Grey should have hesitated to express his feeling on the subject of his disclosure to the Archbishop of Canterbury, of the objection he entertains to the extension of the elective franchise to the metropolitan districts in its present form. These are not times when the Minister should, from any unnecessary apprehension of giving offence, be withheld from candidly stating to the Sovereign what occurs to him; nor has there, at any time, been occasion for reserve in their communication. His Majesty trusts, however, that the expression of such his opinion cannot be productive of the embarrassment to his Government which Earl Grey seems to apprehend from it; and, in addition to what he had authorised Sir Herbert Taylor to write on the subject, he has to observe that, aware as he is of the importance which may attach to every word that drops from him on this subject, and of the difficulty of weighing and calculating the effect of every word in a conversation introduced, though not sought, by himself, he has felt anxious to avoid, as far as possible, all personal discussion of the subject; and that he did not, as Earl Grey knows, willingly engage in it with the Archbishop of Canterbury. At the same time, His Majesty is persuaded that this is at present the only very essential objection entertained by the Archbishop to the Bill, and that the removal of this would insure his support to it. His Majesty has stated very fully, through Sir Herbert Taylor, to Earl Grey, what are his own objections; that they rest chiefly on the apprehension that this provision of the Bill may prove the source of extended and multiplied scenes of riot and disorder in the overgrown metropolis of this kingdom; and his Majesty found those which the Archbishop harboured, and which would be readily admitted by a man of peace, to be of the same character. Feeling these forcibly, as His Majesty does, aware as he is, that the apprehension is shared by many others, and that it is now a principal difficulty in the way of general assent, it has been, and it still is, His Majesty's duty to state his sentiments to Earl Grey, and to endeavour to convince him that the difficulty which attaches to the amendment of this provision is not one which may not be overcome. Earl Grey has indeed, in his letter to Sir Herbert Taylor, which His Majesty will now proceed to answer, admitted that the representation of the London districts cannot be strictly said to be inseparable from the principle of the Bill, and that it ought to be viewed by those who object to it as a matter of detail which may be considered in the Committee; and he observes that, in this view of the matter, then it ought not to influence the votes of those who object to it on the second reading.

The King assents to this, but cannot help remarking that the observation cuts both ways, and that it may be argued by the opponents to the Bill that, as a matter of detail it may be abandoned without any forfeiture of the principle to which Earl Grey is pledged. The King admits, in its fullest view, the importance of these districts from their population, wealth, and influence; and does not deny that some embarrassment and some loss of influence in the popular bearing of the question may arise from the disappointment of so large a class of the community; but he cannot help considering this as a temporary embarrassment which ought not to be suffered to weigh with respect to a permanent evil, and that the risk of disappointing certain classes of the metropolitan population, and of even some local clamour and temporary inconvenience resulting from it, should not stand in the way of an alteration which may prevent the rejection of the new Bill, and thus tend essentially to the removal of the difficulty and danger which Earl Grey apprehends, which may insure the peace of the country, without imposing upon him the necessity of giving a very unwilling ear to the counsels of those who may not scruple to suggest alternatives which His Majesty knows to be not less repugnant to the feelings of Earl Grey than they are to His Majesty's, as being objectionable in principle, and as entailing the sacrifice of the character and interests of that class of his subjects to whose support the Crown has, in every struggle, been chiefly indebted for its existence or its restoration. His Majesty has already admitted, in previous communications, that his Government cannot, in the first instance, propose or even agree to an alteration in this provision of the Bill. He cannot wish them, upon this or any occasion, to expose themselves to the imputation of conniving at their own defeat; but

His Majesty conceives that it would be wise not to discourage the opponents from going into Committee, by denying the possibility of giving therein such consideration to this and other details, as might be productive of modifications calculated to reconcile objections, without prejudice to the principle. In short, that it would be wise to allow it to be understood, that this and other points are details subject to consideration, and not *irrevocably* attached to the principle, and that the discussion in Committee will not be engaged in, without some object beyond the mere and the strict confirmation of the measure as introduced to it. The King does not apprehend, from the absence of a declared determination not to admit such a result, but to stand or fall by the Bill, as it may reach the Lords, any deterioration of the Bill with respect to character or efficiency which should render it impossible to go on with it. He considers, indeed, many of its most essential features, and the principle in great measure to have been assented to; for, after all, the principle is to be found chiefly in Schedule A. The great object at present is to induce the opponents in the House of Lords to go into Committee, or rather not to discourage them from so doing, by suffering it to be understood that the Government have taken a determination which must render all discussion useless, all further modification hopeless; and which, therefore, leaves to them no alternative but unreserved concession or rejection.

The King is aware that very few have as yet committed themselves, so as to lead to any favorable conclusion as to a diminution of the opposition in the House of Lords; but His Majesty cannot allow that there have not been symptoms, and very encouraging symptoms, of a disposition to concede; and although there may be many individuals whose violence may lead them to seek, in the issue of this question, the overthrow of the Government, His Majesty does not believe this to be the general feeling among the Opposition, or that they are in the slightest degree influenced in their adherence to the objections they have made to certain provisions of the Bill, by hostility to the Government, or a determination to oppose and embarrass them on other points.

The King therefore does not see, in the present state of things, any sufficient ground for desponding, or for despairing of its successful and satisfactory termination; and he trusts that every succeeding day will produce some diminution of Earl Grey's uneasiness.

His Majesty, conceiving that Earl Grey may feel desirous of communicating this letter to the Cabinet, will notice other parts of his letter to Sir Herbert Taylor, and particularly those which relate to the state of Ireland.

His Majesty highly approves of the open and unreserved manner in which Earl Grey spoke upon the subject of Mr. O'Connell and the conduct pursued by the Government in his case, in the late discussion in the House of Lords. His declaration was manly, and will show that individual that the Government had acted from policy and forbearance, and not from timidity. The consideration of the Tithe question has doubtless, as Earl Grey observes, been deferred too long; and His Majesty also cordially agrees with him, that it is indispensable to the peace and safety of Ireland to attach, by some provision, the Roman Catholic priesthood to the Government of the country. The King had indeed, very early after the general question had engaged his attention, admitted this opinion, and he has never ceased to entertain it and to feel persuaded that it would tend more than any other measure to the peace and tranquillity of a country so long distracted.

His Majesty also concurs with Earl Grey in considering the present a very propitious moment for introducing such an arrangement; and he doubts whether the Orange party would be found adverse to it (namely to rendering the Catholic clergy stipendiary and dependent on the Government) provided security may be shown to be thereby given to the existence and the maintenance of the Protestant clergy, which, in His Majesty's opinion, could not fail to be one of its effects. The idea is not new; it has often been suggested and canvassed, and has found advocates in the ranks of the most strenuous Protestants.

The King cannot conclude this long letter without repeating to Earl Grey that he will be glad of an early opportunity of conversing on all these important subjects with him.

WILLIAM R.

No. 293.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Dec. 22, 1831.

My dear Lord,—The King having determined that his letter to your Lordship should reply to that which you addressed to him on the 19th, and that which

I had the honour of receiving with it yesterday morning of the same date, and having noticed every part of it, there remains for me to trouble your Lordship with little more than the acknowledgment of them.

His Majesty has received, in the most friendly spirit, every remark which you have made upon the embarrassment which may result from the Archbishop's disclosure of His Majesty's sentiments on the metropolitan representation, and I have no doubt they will have the effect of producing greater caution, though he does not apprehend that, in this instance, the communication of his opinion will prove injurious. His Majesty has however entrusted me to communicate with the Bishop of Worcester, when he comes here for Christmas, and I shall not scruple to introduce His Majesty's opinion, that the opponents of the Bill ought to suffer it to go into Committee, in such terms as will not only have the desired effect on him, but induce him to convey it to others. Indeed the King's sentiments on this point are very decided, and have been unequivocally expressed.

There is only one other point on which I need touch, and I do so with His Majesty's full sanction. Your Lordship is aware that I was private Secretary to King George the Third, when the correspondence took place with the Administration of which you were a member, on the Catholic question, and I was of course privy to all that passed (His Majesty being blind), and had opportunities of learning his sentiments not consigned to paper. I am almost confident that he more than once said that he should not object to a proposition for giving a stipend to the Roman Catholic clergy, and that he observed that no better expedient could be found for reducing the influence of the Pope in Ireland, and for transferring their dependence to the Government from which they would derive the means of support. I have heard the late Duke of York express the same opinion, and the King assures me that the late Mr. Perceval had frequently stated it to him as an arrangement which he should be glad to effect.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 294.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

East Sheen, Dec. 24, 1831.

My dear Sir,—I cannot send the enclosed letter to the King without adding a word to thank you for yours of the same date with that which I received yesterday from His Majesty.

The kindness and confidence expressed by His Majesty is more like that of a friend to an equal, than that of a Sovereign to a subject, and I never can be sufficiently grateful for it.

It is my intention to wait on His Majesty the week after next, say Tuesday the 3rd of January, if it should be convenient to His Majesty. We shall then have a full opportunity of discussing all the difficulties of the present crisis, and I will only say at present that I have not yet seen sufficient symptoms of conversion to encourage me to entertain a very sanguine expectation of there being a majority in the House of Lords, in favour of the second reading; and it is a matter for very serious consideration, whether we shall be justified in carrying the Bill on to that stage, without something like an assurance, that the country would not be exposed to all the disastrous consequences of a second rejection.

What you say of the opinion of George the Third, and of some of the most powerful opponents of the Catholic Relief Bill, would be very consolatory and encouraging, if there were not too much reason to fear that the violent Protestant party, whatever their individual opinions may be, would seize on this or any other measure as a ground for assisting their implacable opposition to the present Administration.

The measure, however, of providing for the Catholic clergy, which, as His Majesty justly observes, is by no means a new idea, and in the expediency of which it has given me the greatest pleasure to learn that His Majesty so entirely concurs, must be attempted, as of indispensable necessity to the peace and safety of Ireland.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 295.

Earl Grey to the King.

East Sheen, Dec. 24, 1831.

Earl Grey begs leave to acknowledge your Majesty's most gracious and condescending letter of the 22nd, which he had the honour of receiving yesterday evening, and to offer to your Majesty the expression of his sincere and heartfelt gratitude for this new proof of your Majesty's confidence and kindness.

As your Majesty is pleased to allow Earl Grey the honour of waiting on your Majesty, to submit to your Majesty in person the views entertained by his colleagues and himself, of the present situation of affairs as connected more particularly with the Reform Bill,—a permission of which Earl Grey hopes to be able to avail himself at the beginning of next month, he will not trouble your Majesty at present with any observations on that subject further than to say, that he will always keep anxiously in view your Majesty's known opinions on every part of this important question; and that he will not even suggest for your Majesty's reconsideration, any proposition which is not in strict accordance with them, except under the conviction of its expediency with a view to the peace and good government of the country. Earl Grey, however, cannot help adding a single word as to the consequences which your Majesty appears particularly to apprehend from the representation of the London districts. By the provisions of the new Bill much has been done in the way of shortening the duration of the poll, and regulating the manner in which it is to be taken in different divisions to prevent the recurrence of disorder and tumult; these regulations may be further assisted by the plan which is in contemplation for granting charters to the different towns which are, in future, to send members to Parliament, and which, subject to such modifications as the particular circumstances of their situation may require, may, Earl Grey thinks, be extended to the metropolitan districts.

It is remarkable, that in the city of London, frequent as the contests have been, and numerous as is the constituency, the elections under the superintendence of the municipal authorities have been conducted with a degree of regularity and quiet which has too frequently been interrupted in Westminster and Southwark.

Earl Grey deeply regrets the new difficulties which have been started by the Government of France, and to which your Majesty's attention will have been drawn by Viscount Granville's dispatches, on account of the treaty respecting the fortresses. A dispatch from Count Pozzo di Borgo to Prince Lieven, which has been communicated by the latter to Earl Grey, gives a similar account to those of Lord Granville, only representing Count Sebastiani to have taken a higher tone in his communications with the Russian than with the British Minister. In Count Pozzo's account of the language held by the French Minister, there occurs this remarkable expression 'qu'il serait trop heureux de trouver une porte aussi honorable pour sortir du Ministère.' It is not impossible that, appalled by the difficulties of their situation, greatly increased by the King's having greatly declined in the public estimation, and by the discredit which the trial now depending with respect to the will of the Duc de Bourbon cannot fail to throw on him, the French Ministers may really be desirous of escaping from the dangers with which they are surrounded. Such an event, there is too much reason to fear, would throw France back into a state of revolution and all Europe into a situation of uncertainty and danger.

All which, &c. GREY.

No. 296.

The King to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Dec. 26, 1831.

The King acknowledges Earl Grey's letter of the 24th instant, and assures him that he will be glad to receive him on Tuesday the 3rd of January, or upon any other day that will suit him, and to converse freely with him upon the present situation of affairs, perfectly convinced as is His Majesty that the subject will be brought fairly before him in all its bearings, and that the peace and good government of the country have not ceased to be the objects of Earl Grey's anxious solicitude.

His Majesty cannot hesitate to admit that the effects which he apprehends from the representation of the London districts will be much diminished by the provisions of the Bill which shorten the duration of the poll, and regulate the manner in which it is to be taken in different divisions, and that those regulations may be further assisted by the plan in contemplation for granting charters to the different towns which are in future to send Members to Parliament, and which may, with certain modifications, be extended to the metropolitan districts. All these are objects of detail which are fair subjects of discussion in Committee; and His Majesty cannot but indulge the expectation that, if they be held out as such when the general subject is re-introduced to the House of Lords, they will operate as an encouragement to the prosecution of the question to that stage of the Bill.

The King has observed with regret, though without surprise, the progress of the difficulties which have arisen on account of the treaty respecting the fortresses. His Majesty is warranted in saying, that he had anticipated them from the moment that it was proposed to substitute Philippeville and Marienburg for other places which had not formed part of France before the Revolutionary war, more especially as the change had been carefully concealed from the knowledge of the French Government, and the circumstance thus received greater importance than it merits. As the question now stands, it appears to the King a very simple one. Is it worth while, for the sake of two small fortresses, comparatively insignificant, but to which French vanity attaches some value, to risk either a quarrel with France, or the dissolution of its Government; and, in either event, the interruption of every arrangement which had been brought so near to its conclusion?

Earl Grey may learn from Lord Palmerston, that His Majesty had stated to him his opinion, that it would be advisable not to insist upon the demolition of these two places, and he regrets that it was not abandoned as soon as it was discovered that it must become a subject of contention. This country cannot suffer, in point of credit or of interest, in giving it up; but, after what has passed, the credit of France is deeply committed in the issue, its national vanity is concerned, and it cannot be for the advantage of this country or its allies to assail it on so tender a point, or to persist in so doing when so little is to be gained by such a course, and when a Continental war may result from it.

Although Philippeville and Marienburg should not be demolished, it does not follow that they need be kept in repair; and this observation may apply to Ypres, or to any other place of which the demolition had been contemplated.

The King has stated his sentiments at some length upon this question, as he cannot help viewing it as involving matter which may affect very seriously the issue of negotiations which are still pending.

WILLIAM R.

No. 297.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Dec. 26, 1831.

My dear Lord,—I have had the honour of submitting your Lordship's letter of the 24th inst. to the King, who has, in his reply to that which you addressed to him, stated that he will be glad to receive you on the 3rd January. You will find His Majesty quite disposed to enter fully into every question you may consider it necessary to bring before him, and to meet fairly all that you may have occasion to submit to him. His Majesty by no means underrates the difficulties of the present period, but he is prepared to contend with them, and I trust that they will not prove insurmountable.

I am happy to acquaint your Lordship that the Bishop of Worcester told me yesterday that he had made up his mind to vote for the second reading, and that he had reason to believe that some of his fraternity, who *had* been violent opponents of the Bill, would take the same course. I told him that they would, by so doing, meet the wishes of His Majesty, as I understood he had expressed them to the Archbishop of Canterbury; and that I was warranted in saying to him, and he might repeat it, that His Majesty was of opinion that the Peers in general would be very ill-advised not to allow the Bill to go into Committee, and would place themselves in a very awkward position towards the country by rejecting the Bill without discussion, and without allowing a possibility of coming to an understanding upon some matters of detail, the adjustment of which might prevent a second rejection of the Bill. They ought not to forget, also, the situation in which they would place the King, who ought not to be reduced to the possible necessity of making his choice between alternatives alike distressing and injurious to the best interests of the country. I held nearly the same language, the day before yesterday, to Lord Burghersh, who introduced the subject, and spoke very quietly upon it. It occurred to me that he would repeat what I said to Lord Wharncliffe and Lord Beverley who are here, and that they would conclude that I would not hold this language if it did not accord with the King's sentiments, although I carefully avoided committing His Majesty.

I have, however, mentioned to him what has passed, which he approved.

Your Lordship will observe how strong is the King's feeling as to the impolicy of standing out for the demolition of Philippeville and Marienburg, and I assure you that it has never varied; on the contrary, that he attaches so little value to them, that he would readily have agreed to their being restored to France, if anything could thereby have been gained for the general object of peace and conciliation.

His Majesty has ordered me to send your Lordship a letter, which he received yesterday morning from the Duke of Cambridge, respecting the claims of the widows of the officers of the German Legion to pensions, the consideration of which by the Secretary of War, has been suspended since the 26th of August, 1830, for reasons not stated; and His Majesty will be obliged to you to take such steps upon the subject as may produce a just and equitable decision.

* * * * *

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No 298.

Earl Grey to the King.

East Sheen, Dec. 27, 1831.

Earl Grey presents his humble duty to your Majesty with his grateful acknowledgment of your Majesty's most gracious letter of yesterday.

If the question respecting the fortresses had rested upon those of Marienburg and Philippeville alone, Earl Grey entirely concurs in your Majesty's opinion that, in itself, nothing could be of less importance: but the manner and the suspicious motive of insisting upon even a trivial matter, may give it an importance which does not intrinsically belong to it. It is in this view that it might become difficult to yield upon a point, which the French Government can have no assignable object in pressing, except that of repossessing themselves, at some future time, of these fortresses.

But the French Government have now taken up a broader and much more inadmissible pretension. They protest against the interference of the Four Powers in any way respecting the fortresses which are to be preserved, as altogether inconsistent with the principle of neutrality, and announce in positive terms their determination to resist it. Under these circumstances it appeared to those of your Majesty's Ministers who were assembled yesterday in Cabinet for the consideration of this matter, that it was necessary to proceed to the ratification of the treaty. This opinion Earl Grey concludes will have been communicated to your Majesty by Lord Palmerston.

Earl Grey has been much gratified by learning, that your Majesty thinks the objections to the representation of the London districts in some degree diminished, by the regulations which are proposed for obviating the danger of tumult and disorder at the elections; and your Majesty may be assured that, in bringing the question before the House of Lords, Earl Grey will abstain as much as possible from saying any thing that may alarm the fears, or increase the objections, of his opponents.

All which, &c. GREY.

No. 299.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

East Sheen, Dec. 27, 1831.

My dear Sir,—I have this morning received your letter accompanying the King's.

What you tell me of the Bishop of Worcester is most satisfactory, and your conversation with Lord Burghersh also, whilst it cannot possibly do any harm, may prove of some advantage. But you are aware that Lord Westmoreland is one of the most irreconcilable of our opponents; and every thing I hear confirms me in the belief, that they are taking the most active measures for forming a systematic attack on the Government for the purpose of overthrowing it. Lord Lyndhurst appears decidedly to have engaged with them; and they talk very confidently of there being no diminution of their numbers, on the second reading of the new Bill in the House of Lords.

I shall avail myself of the King's kind permission to be at Brighton on the 3rd. Will you have the goodness to order rooms for me at the hotel.

Sir H. Parnell is in Ireland; I have therefore sent the Duke of Cambridge's letter to Lord Althorp, and desired him to make the necessary inquiries into the case of widows of officers who have served in the German Legion, and the cause of the suspension of their pensions.

* * * * *

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 300.

Minute of Conversation with the King.

Jan. 4. 1832.

Having prepared the King to expect a communication on the means of providing against the danger of a second defeat of the measure of Reform in the House of Lords, both by previous correspondence and a preliminary conversation yesterday evening, I had the honour of a long interview with His Majesty this morning on the subject.

I began by laying before him the little security we had for carrying the Bill on the second reading; that the general expectation of such a result, from the increased majority of the House of Commons, and the strong expression of public opinion, might be disappointed, as it had been before; that we must look, therefore, to something more certain; and from all the data that I had been able to obtain, the utmost that I could state as resting on any reasonable assurance, was a difference of twenty votes; that this left a majority of twenty votes against the Bill; and that, even in the case of its being carried on the second reading, there would be too much reason to fear, that many even of those who, we may hope, would concur with us in that vote, would be likely to support such alterations in the Committee as would be fatal to the efficiency of the Bill, and consequently impossible for the Government to consent to.

It was impossible, therefore, to delay looking to the fearful alternative which was thus forced upon our consideration, of either incurring all the danger attending the loss of the Bill in one or other of these modes, or of preventing it by the use of the means which the prerogative of the Crown afforded for meeting such an exigency.

To look first at the danger of losing the Bill: it appeared to me of the most formidable nature; that the country was at present in a state of comparative repose, from a confident expectation that the Bill would be carried, under the assurance that the Government possessed the means that would be effectual for this purpose, and were determined to use them; that the consequence of a disappointment would be fatal to the peace of the country; that the House of Lords, already a good deal injured in public opinion, would incur a danger threatening its very existence; and that the Administration, and perhaps the King himself, exposed to a degree of odium proportioned to the confidence which they at present enjoy, would be involved in the common danger, which would be greatly increased by the destruction of all reliance on the principle of public men, and by the belief that the public had been deceived.

Contemplating this danger, which all the accounts from the best informed and most trustworthy persons from all parts of the country represented in the strongest light, the next point to be considered was the possibility of averting it; and for this purpose I saw nothing left but a creation of Peers; that I considered this in itself as a great evil, exposed to great and weighty objections, and which nothing could have induced me to think of resorting to, except the danger, or I should rather say the certainty, of incurring one infinitely greater; that it was painful to me to propose to His Majesty a measure to which I knew that His Majesty objected, and to which I myself had originally had the greatest objections; that I still saw them in their full force; but that, in looking at the alternative with which we were threatened, the danger of adopting such a measure seemed to me so infinitely less in the comparison, that I could no longer hesitate in stating my deliberate conviction, that it was become necessary for the safety of the country; that I had stated this view of our present situation to the Cabinet; that several of my colleagues concurred with me, and perhaps went farther than me, in this opinion, and that others still appeared to entertain a strong sense of the objections which they had felt from the beginning, to a measure which they considered as so injurious to the character and independence of the House of Lords, as not to be thought of whilst there remained any hope of averting the danger by other measures; but the result, however, of our deliberation had been to authorise me to submit the whole matter to His Majesty's consideration, on the ground of making a partial addition to the House of Lords as at present, to repel the notion, which had been assiduously promulgated, that any new creations were positively precluded; and of our being allowed to propose a further addition hereafter, if it should be found necessary.

To all this the King listened with the greatest attention and with evident anxiety. He stated that he had long foreseen that such a proposition would eventually be made to him, and that he had given it his most serious consideration; that his objections to the creation of Peers for such a purpose had already been stated to his Ministers; that I myself had acknowledged their validity; and that he still contemplated, with undiminished anxiety, the danger of such a precedent; that he was prepared, however, to listen to the advice which his Ministers might think it their duty to offer to him, but that he wished it should be in writing; that his answer would be given in the same manner; and that if it should ultimately be determined to make an addition to the Peerage, for the purpose of increasing the strength of the Government on the question of Reform, he trusted that it would be so managed as to affect the permanent character of the House of Lords as little as possible, and asked what were my views on this part of the question.

I stated that it was unquestionably my wish to limit any new creations in the manner to which His Majesty seemed to allude, as it had been my anxious desire to avoid it altogether; that in any new creations, therefore, I should look to such as would produce the least possible permanent addition to the numbers of the Peerage; that there were two which I had formerly mentioned as having been promised, and suspended only on account of temporary circumstances at the period of the Coronation,—Lord F. Osborne and Mr. Dundas. These, His Majesty observed, stood on separate grounds, and that he had no objection to them. That, in addition to these, I thought it would be desirable to seek for the additional strength that would be required, by calling up eldest sons; that a considerable number might thus be obtained; and that, in the first instance, I would propose calling up those who were not in Parliament, which would furnish enough for the partial creation to which I had alluded as advisable at present, (say in all eight or ten,) and would afford the best indication of the possibility of a further addition from those who had seats in the House of Commons, if it should be wanted; that, next to these, collateral heirs to Peerages, where no direct heirs were likely to succeed, should be resorted to; and that, in this manner, any permanent addition to the Peerage of any consequence might be avoided; that I did not say, however, that some creations of Commoners of high character and great property might not be advisable, but that I certainly thought it most desirable that such creations should be as much limited as possible, both for the purpose of avoiding a permanent increase of the Peerage, and the subtraction of more property from the House of Commons, too much having already been withdrawn from that assembly.

I added that, by a first partial creation, such as I had recommended, I had great hopes that an effect might be produced, which would in a great degree, if not entirely, obviate the necessity of a subsequent addition.

To all this His Majesty most graciously listened, and stated his decided opinion, that if an addition was to be made, it should be regulated in this manner; in a word, that the addition should be made, first, by calling up eldest sons; next, collateral heirs; and, thirdly, Scotch and Irish Peers; so that the whole Peerage of the United Kingdom should not be augmented.

His Majesty added that he trusted it would not be proposed to raise to the Peerage any of those who had been forward in agitating the country, as nothing could induce him to consent to the advancement of persons of that description. His Majesty also, after expressing the greatest anxiety as to the present state of the country, stated his confident expectation that his Ministers, after the settlement of this question, should it be happily effected, would make their stand against any further encroachments tending to a dangerous diminution of the necessary power of the Government.

To this I gave a ready assent; and the conversation, in which much more passed, but nothing material has been omitted, ended by His Majesty again desiring that the advice of his confidential servants on this important question should be submitted to him in writing.

No. 301.

The King to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Jan. 5, 1832.

The King has read with attention the Minute which Earl Grey has made of what passed in his interview with His Majesty yesterday, and he acknowledges its perfect accuracy in all points.

His Majesty will proceed to make some remarks upon the questions submitted by Earl Grey for his consideration, with the understanding, however, that he shall not be thereby considered as pledging himself to the adoption of any proposal or suggestion, and that he reserves his decision, until his pleasure shall have been taken in the more formal shape of a Minute of Cabinet.

Earl Grey has most correctly admitted his sense of the strong objections entertained by His Majesty to any addition to the Peerage for the purpose of carrying the Reform Bill, or any other measure; and he has, with similar justice, taken credit to himself for having originally, and indeed at all times when the subject has been touched upon, expressed his own objections to a creation of Peers upon such an occasion. Earl Grey has added that he still sees these objections in their full force. The King is, therefore, satisfied that nothing but the apprehension of a second rejection of the Reform Bill in the House of Lords, and a conviction of the danger of incurring a greater evil, and all the lamentable consequences which have been so forcibly stated by him, could have induced Earl Grey to yield to the advice of those who have urged a resort to this alternative, and to have proposed it to His Majesty.

The King is naturally confirmed in this opinion by Earl Grey's verbal communication of the sentiments of some of his colleagues (recorded also in his Minute) as being still strongly opposed to this measure, whilst there remained any hope of averting the danger by other means.

Strong as is and as ought to be the King's feeling on this subject, he is, on the other hand, sensible that circumstances must occur, as indeed they have occurred, in which it becomes a duty to sacrifice feeling to necessity. It has always been his desire to remove difficulties rather than to raise them; and he therefore will not add to those which have now arisen by hesitation, or by keeping those who are entrusted with the administration of the affairs of this country at this critical period in suspense, as to the view which he may be disposed to take of circumstances which call for his decision.

As matters now stand, His Majesty is assured, and he believes, that the peace and the tranquillity of the country depend upon an early settlement of the question which so intensely agitates it. He has reason to know that Earl Grey and the other members of his Government consider the success of the measure as identified with their continuance in office. He has no wish for any change of his Ministers, as he is satisfied with the manner in which they discharge the duties of their arduous and laborious offices; and as he is equally satisfied of the serious injury which the country must sustain from frequent changes of men and measures, more especially from such change at the present period, when the state of its domestic and foreign concerns and relations so imperiously calls for stability of authority and consistency of purpose so essential to the establishment of confidence.

But even if such were not His Majesty's sentiments, and it should be his desire to escape from the measure which is so repugnant to his feelings, by risking the alternative of the loss of the Reform Bill, or the dissolution of the present Administration, a doubt would occur, whether there be in the country any individuals of respectability and capacity willing to undertake the task he would impose upon them, by calling them to his councils; or whether, if these could be found, they would be able to maintain themselves in office and to carry on the government of the country; and His Majesty believes that this doubt would be solved in the negative.

If, however, all these considerations should appear to the King sufficient to justify his consenting to an addition to the House of Lords, for the purpose of giving to his Government such a preponderance of influence and votes as shall enable it to carry the Reform Bill, he cannot lose sight of the objections which he entertains to this measure, so far as not to feel it to be his duty to cause his assent to rest upon a principle which shall, as far as possible, maintain the respectability of the House of Lords as it is now constituted, as shall preserve to the Peerage of this country the *hereditary* distinction which it has not yet ceased to enjoy, and shall secure the character and the independence of this high and important branch of the State from any permanent consequences of an act resorted to with a view to a present emergency.

His Majesty therefore must establish, as a condition *inseparable* from the possibility of his assenting to the proposal which may be submitted to him by his Cabinet, that, with the exception solely of Lord Francis Osborne and Mr. Dundas, to whose elevation to the Peerage he had already consented, and which had indeed, as observed by Earl Grey, been merely suspended, and possibly of Sir John Leach, which would stand on distinct ground, although taking place upon this occasion, the addition to be made to the House of Lords, whatever may be the numbers, may be effected *exclusively* by calling up eldest sons, or collateral heirs to Peerages, where no direct heirs are likely to succeed.

His Majesty is satisfied, from the inspection of the lists which Earl Grey put into his hands, that enough could be obtained from this source, without resorting to Scotch and Irish Peers, to whose transfer to the English Peerage he, however, would not have objected, if it had been shown to him to be indispensable towards making up the number required.

But His Majesty does not think it would, in any view of the question, be wise to limit the selection to those not in Parliament, even in the first instance, it appearing to him that the objections to the exclusion of those holding seats in the House of Commons are greater and more deserving of consideration than any that may attach to opening the representation of counties, or other seats for which contests would arise. Besides which the course and results of these contests may serve the purpose of the Government, by affording a good criterion of the feeling of the country in favour of the measure of Reform, a contradiction to the assertion that a strong reaction in it has taken place, and therefore an additional ground of justification for so strong an exercise of the prerogative as that which is now recommended.

His Majesty is further of opinion that, upon these occasions, when once the decision is made, the measure should be effectual and conclusive, and taken without the *appearance* of doubt or hesitation, not subject to contingencies which might defeat its object, to the risk of erroneous estimates of comparative strength, or to the possible necessity of a *second edition*, in consequence of the insufficiency of the first. If Earl Grey considers that twenty-one may be required *eventually*, and is satisfied that his data are correct, that number should be added at once in the manner proposed, instead of feeling the pulse, and beating about the bush, by adding eight or ten, at the risk of a failure, which would betray the absence of due calculation and discrimination, and of a fixed determination, and might possibly increase the difficulty and the objection, so as to render the propriety or policy of a renewal of the attempt very questionable.

The King, having declared that his acquiescence in the proposed measure must be subject to the exclusion of all *creations*, excepting the three specially named, it becomes unnecessary that he should repeat his caution as to raising to the Peerage any individuals who have been forward in agitating the country.

But His Majesty cannot close this communication without again stating to Earl Grey and to his other confidential servants, the extreme importance, which, in times of great peril, when the overthrow of all legitimate authority, the destruction of ancient institutions, of social order, and of every gradation and link of society are threatened, when a revolutionary and demoralising spirit is making frightful strides, when a poisonous press, almost unchecked, guides, excites, and at the same time controls public opinion, His Majesty must attach to their assurance, that, after the settlement of this all-engrossing question of Parliamentary Reform shall have been happily settled, they will strenuously exert themselves to resist and repress further encroachments tending to a dangerous diminution of the necessary power of the Government, and to a systematic reduction of the authority, influence, and dignity of the Crown. It is impossible His Majesty should view otherwise than with serious apprehension the preponderance of the House of Commons in the direction of the affairs of this country, if it be applied, as it has been occasionally applied, and more frequently attempted to be applied, to the prejudice of the Monarchy and the degradation of its attributes. He is not conscious of having betrayed any disposition to an extravagant display of dignity and splendour, or to the exercise of despotic and arbitrary power. He is therefore warranted in ascribing the propensity for encroachment, which has been shown by the House of Commons, to that growing fancy for *liberalism* which, however fair its appearance, is by many assumed to cover democratic and levelling purposes, and may mislead others to the encouragement and support of schemes fatal to the existence of the Constitution and the form of Government under which this country has so long prospered.

It is His Majesty's duty, it must be his anxious wish, to endeavour to preserve to his dominions the blessings which a bountiful Providence has bestowed upon them, and to transmit them to his posterity as little impaired as the spirit of these times will allow; and he appeals earnestly to his Ministers for their utmost aid towards this object, and for their strenuous support of his endeavour to stem the torrent.

WILLIAM R.

No. 302.

Minute of Cabinet.

Jan. 7, 1832.

At a Meeting of your Majesty's servants at the Foreign Office on Saturday, January 7,

PRESENT:

The Lord President,	The Viscount Althorp,
The Lord Privy Seal,	The Viscount Melbourne,
The Duke of Richmond,	The Viscount Goderich,
The Earl of Carlisle,	The Viscount Palmerston,
The Earl Grey,	Mr. Stanley,

Mr. Grant,

Earl Grey laid before them the Minute of the Conversation which he had the honour of having with your Majesty on Wednesday the 4th inst., and the observations which your Majesty had been pleased to make on that conversation.

Your Majesty's servants, deeply sensible of the condescending kindness of your Majesty, in receiving so graciously the communication which, with their concurrence, Earl Grey had made to your Majesty, beg to express their acknowledgment of the enlightened and paternal sentiments of your Majesty on the present very difficult state of public affairs, and their entire adoption of your Majesty's opinion of the necessity of resisting any proceedings which may tend to the establishment of a dangerous and unconstitutional control over the Government, which would be equally fatal to the efficiency of the executive power, and to the independence of the Legislature.

With respect to the particular object of their present deliberation, after repeating their sincere gratitude for the disposition shown by your Majesty to receive with favour such advice as, in conformity with the views already explained to your Majesty by Earl Grey, they may find it necessary, in the execution of their duty, to tender to your Majesty, they humbly hope that your Majesty will allow them to defer submitting their final opinion on the best manner of acting with respect to this important matter, till they can have the assistance of the Lord Chancellor at another meeting of your Majesty's servants early in the ensuing week.

All which, &c.

No. 303.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

East Sheen, Jan. 8, 1832.

My dear Sir,—My report of what had passed between His Majesty and me in the conversation with which he honoured me at Brighton, and the statement of His Majesty's feelings and opinions on the very important subjects which it had been my duty to lay before him, were received by the Cabinet with all the feelings of respect and gratitude which this new proof of confidence and kindness must necessarily inspire.

In the deliberation which followed, and which turned, of course, upon the same topics which had before occupied the King's servants, nothing material occurred which at all altered the views I had before had the honour of explaining to His Majesty; or which could make it necessary for me to trouble His Majesty further at present. We confined ourselves, therefore, to the mere expression of our deep sense of His Majesty's gracious disposition, and our readiness to second His Majesty's just and beneficent views, in resisting any dangerous encroachments on the power of the Crown, or the independence of the Legislature; and I am sanguine in my expectation and belief that the settlement of the Reform question, if we are fortunate enough to effect it in a satisfactory way, will furnish to the Government more effectual means for this purpose than it has for some time possessed.

Various and concurrent information from different quarters strongly confirms what I have already told you, of the determination of the leaders of the Opposition to resist the new Bill as they did the last; and I have nothing more encouraging to hold out, than I had when I had the pleasure of seeing you at Brighton, except that in an interview which I had after the Cabinet with Lord Somers, he unequivocally declared his intention of supporting the Bill on the second reading, and probably throughout, though he reserved the right of considering any alterations that may be proposed in the Committee. His chief difficulty, indeed the only one that he specified, was with respect to metropolitan districts; and even as to these, after discussing this point with him, he did not seem to have finally made up his mind.

Accounts from Ireland, and more particularly a letter from the Attorney-General to Mr. Stanley, encourage a belief, which I believe I expressed to you at Brighton, that Mr. O'Connell's late campaign has been, in a great degree, a failure.

I send herewith, according to His Majesty's desire, copies of the lists of Peers, and the minute of my conversation with His Majesty. The lists will probably require some revision, with a view to a proper selection of names from them.

I write to-day to the Archbishop of Canterbury, to get everything prepared with as little delay as possible for issuing the Proclamation for the Fast, which can only be done by His Majesty in Council. There will be, I understand, a Recorder's report; and it will also be necessary to hold a Council for appointing the new Sheriffs, which, according to what I learnt yesterday from the Lord President, cannot be till the end of the month, or at least not before the 22nd. It would be desirable to expedite all these matters at once, if it can be done, to save His Majesty the trouble of two journeys, which may be done by postponing the day of the fast till a later period in February, it being usual, as the Clerk of the Council informs me, to have the Fast generally six weeks, but never less than a month, after the issuing of the Proclamation.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 304.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Jan. 9, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have had the honour of submitting your Lordship's letter of yesterday to the King, who was much gratified by learning that your report of what passed here between you and him, and the communication of his feelings and opinions, had been so well received by your colleagues. The general expression of the sentiments of the Cabinet as being in unison with his own, upon points to which your Lordship observed that His Majesty's feelings were most anxiously directed (as indeed they have not since for a moment ceased to be), has also proved very satisfactory to His Majesty, and will, I hope, tend to quiet the apprehensions he had admitted.

It is to be lamented that nothing has yet occurred to remove the impression that the leaders of the Opposition are determined to resist the new Bill; but it would seem that they are much divided as to the character and extent of their opposition, and the grounds upon which to rest it; and His Majesty cannot but build a hope upon this circumstance, as well as upon the occasional intimation of a friendly disposition of some of them, Lord Somers for instance, that the necessity for resorting to the measure, which he believes to be not less repugnant to your feelings than it is to his own, will become daily less urgent.

The King has learnt with pleasure, that a recent letter from the Attorney-General of Ireland to Mr. Stanley and other accounts confirm the belief you expressed here, that Mr. O'Connell is losing ground.

His Majesty will be quite ready to go to London for a Council whenever it may be required, but it certainly would be a matter of convenience if the Proclamation for the Fast, the Recorder's report, and the appointment of the new Sheriffs, could all be brought forward on the same day.

I have, &c. H. Taylor.

P. S.—I have troubled your Lordship with a separate letter on the subject of a conversation held yesterday with Lord Wharncliffe.

No. 305.

The King to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Jan. 9, 1832.

The King acknowledges the receipt of the Minute of Cabinet held on the 7th inst., transmitted by Earl Grey; and His Majesty derives great satisfaction from the assurance it conveys, that his confidential servants entirely adopt his opinion of the necessity of resisting any proceedings which may tend to the establishment of a dangerous and unconstitutional control over the Government, and to undue interference with its executive functions, and the independence of the Legislature.

His Majesty approves of their deferring to submit their final opinion upon the particular object of their deliberation, till they can have the assistance of the Lord Chancellor. WILLIAM R.

No. 306.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Jan. 9, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I think it right to mention to your Lordship that, in the course of my walk yesterday, I met Lord Wharncliffe, and that we conversed for some time on the subject of the Reform question, &c. I have known him intimately for years, but although he has been *here* some time, we had very seldom met, and then only exchanged a few words upon indifferent matters. Yesterday, however, we were going in the same direction, were alone, and, although neither courted the subject, one thing led to another, and the main question was introduced by a reference to my *first* communications with Lord Chandos, and their result in the interview with your Lordship, &c., in Downing Street. I then asked him whether he was aware of Lord Chandos having again written to me recently, with the knowledge of the Duke of Buckingham. He had not heard of it, and I described the communication as being to the same general purport as the former, made, as I conceived, for your Lordship's information, and as having left the question where it was. From his remarks on the part taken by Lord Chandos, and more particularly the Duke of Buckingham's supposed concurrence in it, it is very evident that he and Lord Harrowby are not desirous of being concerned with them in any negotiation; and I should almost say that they were unwillingly drawn into it upon the last occasion. Lord Wharncliffe said he concluded I had seen the paper he gave you, and I told him you had sent it to me for the King's information, and had indeed fully apprised His Majesty of all that had passed between you. He said that his persuasion that this had been the case had mainly prevented his yielding to the urgency of several of his friends, that he should take advantage of his being here, to ask an audience of the King for the purpose of stating what were his sentiments and those of Lord Harrowby and others who concurred with them; and of impressing upon His Majesty that they have been ready and willing, and that they continue so, to use all conciliatory means towards bringing the question to a termination, which ought to satisfy all reasonable men, and would effect the object in view in a manner that would be consistent with the best interests of the country, and with its peace and security: That what they sought could not be considered as reducing in any degree the efficiency of the Bill; and that they were influenced by conviction of the necessity and expediency of their views, not by factious motives, or any desire to injure the existing Government: That he (Lord Wharncliffe) had never been disinclined to a moderate Reform; he had not taken a violent line as some others had done; that he was anxious to see this question satisfactorily settled; that he felt how much the state of the country called for union among those who are interested in its welfare and tranquillity, and therefore for a strong Government; and that he had no desire to impede and embarrass, so long as he was not called upon for the abandonment of principles which he felt it to be his duty to maintain; but that he might be driven to a course which he deprecated, and that if even he himself should abstain from it, he should despair of prevailing upon others not to give way to the effect of disappointment, if they should still find the Government disinclined to meet them part of the way, or to recede one tittle from the stiff ground they had occupied. He hoped, however, that something might be done in Committee in the House of Commons, which might prevent the Bill from being introduced in the Lords in a shape which would at once show the determination of the Government to admit of no modification, and would deprive those who had opposed it in the Lords, of all hope of obtaining anything by engaging in discussion, or by showing a desire to facilitate, an accommodation. But, above all, he anxiously hoped that the Government would not decide upon having recourse to another *coup d'état.* He should lament this, as leading to consequences far more serious than those which might attach to the passing of the Bill in its present objectionable shape. He was perfectly aware that the King had a right to exercise his prerogative in the creation of Peers, and the objection would come with an ill grace from himself, who had been, not many years since, advanced to the Peerage. But all must feel that the extensive exercise of this prerogative upon such an occasion, was a very strong act; and, above all, they must feel the extreme danger of the precedent in such times; and that if the Sovereign should be advised to resort to this expedient for the purpose of overcoming the constitutional and legitimate opposition of the House of Lords to a popular measure, and should appear to yield, not only to that advice but to popular clamour and the dictates of the press, a strong temptation would be held out for the trial of the same experiment, and the same means of obtaining it on any future occasion, and no one could foresee to what ends and to what extent the practice might not be applied.

I believe I have correctly stated the purport, though possibly not the exact expressions, or words, of Lord Wharncliffe's remarks, into the discussion of which I avoided entering, as I did making the slightest reference to your Lordship's recent visit or the object of it; nor, indeed, did he endeavour to draw one word from me, or advert to it himself. I merely said that he must be sensible that, if he wished to have an audience of the King, it would be granted without difficulty; but he must be aware also that it could not be free from embarrassment to His Majesty, and I was certain His Majesty would give him credit for not having applied for it. He said that he felt this also, and his own inclination led him to be satisfied with knowing that His Majesty had seen his communication to your Lordship, and was apprised of his and Lord Harrowby's sentiments. If, after this, His Majesty did not consider that the disposition to conciliation and accommodation which they showed was such as to render unnecessary the *coup d'état* which they dreaded: if it should be proposed in order to carry the point, without any modification, he could have nothing further to say.

It was for His Majesty to use his judgment and discretion.

He added, however, that he wished me to state to His Majesty that he had been urged to solicit an audience, and the reasons why he had not taken that liberty; and I replied that I should not wish to submit this to the King, without being at liberty to communicate to your Lordship what had passed: to which he answered that he could not possibly object to this; on the contrary, that he should wish me to do so.

I have therefore read this letter to His Majesty, who approved of my having addressed it to you.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

P. S.—I have omitted to say that, in noticing Lord Chandos' last letter and my reply to it, I mentioned the *private* opinion I had given, that the settlement of the question in the House of Lords would be much facilitated by allowing it to go into Committee.

No. 307.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

East Sheen, Jan. 10, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I have this morning received the King's answer to the Cabinet Minute, and your two letters of the same date. Both are most satisfactory to me, and I feel particularly obliged to you for your account of your conversation with Lord Wharncliffe. In this, as in every other instance, I feel myself bound to acknowledge, in the strongest terms, the correct and honourable character of your conduct.

I confess I do not quite understand the principle on which Lord Wharncliffe seems inclined to act. Why, if the principle of the Bill is admitted, should he not go into a Committee, to correct in it any of the details which he may think objectionable? Is there not the same power to oppose there what appears to him to be contrary to the public interest, as upon the second reading to resist the principle of the Bill, to which, however reluctantly, he feels it necessary to assent? We have done a good deal to obviate objections, and to afford grounds for suffering the Bill to go to a Committee, to those who before opposed it. And though we may think ourselves precluded from going further at present, it does not follow, with respect to certain parts of the details, that the opinion of the Government might not be overruled in the Committee. Surely this would be a safer and more reasonable course for those who admit the necessity of Reform, than to afford reason for doubting the sincerity of that profession, by directly opposing the Bill in the stage in which its principle alone is in question.

I cannot urge these arguments, as in doing so I might appear to be holding out a hope that I was prepared to be beaten upon points which I would not previously surrender. I need not tell you that such a course of conduct is utterly incompatible with my notions of what a public man, both in honour and duty, is bound to do. I should therefore strenuously maintain all the provisions of the Bill, which I think justified by considerations of expediency, though, as they differ in importance, it would become a question for subsequent consideration, whether any alterations which might be made were such as to injure the principle and efficiency of the Bill to such a degree as to compel the Ministers, in conformity with their repeated declarations, to abandon it. But this also is what I could not say to any of the opposers of the measure, and only in the strictest confidence to those who support it.

The Chancellor is to be in town to-night, and we are to have a Cabinet at twelve to-morrow.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 308.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Jan. 11, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's letter of yesterday, and to assure you how much I am flattered and gratified by the kind expression which it contains of your approbation and sanction of my conduct and proceedings in a situation which, notwithstanding all the advantage I derive from the correct and upright principle on which my master acts, and your friendship and confidence, must at times place me under circumstances of great delicacy and difficulty.

I have had the honour of submitting your letter to the King, to whom it has proved very satisfactory, as it not only appears to him to offer a confirmation, he has not ceased to entertain, of your decidedly sharing the reluctance with which he would resort to the alternative of adding to the House of Lords for the object in view, but as it also affords additional ground for the impression, which is strong in his mind, that the necessity for adopting it might be averted by a free and dispassionate discussion in Committee of the points of detail at issue; and if a clear understanding could be established, that many of those who would engage in it are prepared to meet more than half way (which His Majesty verily believes to be the case), and that the object of both parties is accommodation, and a desire to afford facilities, while the dread of seeming to make a sacrifice of consistency impedes the approach to so important an object.

I am quite sensible of the objections, on principle, to your Lordship's making an admission to this extent, otherwise than in the strictest confidence, and to those who support the measure; and I beg you will feel assured that, in all I have had occasion to say on the subject, I have most carefully avoided to commit you, and that I shall continue to observe that caution. I have in fact merely expressed my *general* conviction of your disposition to meet in the same spirit any conciliatory steps which might be taken by those opposed to the Bill.

This is the assurance I have again this day given to Lord Wharncliffe, who has been with the King in consequence of a note from him, which I beg to enclose.

His Majesty has ordered me to acquaint your Lordship that Lord Wharncliffe has been with him nearly an hour, during which His Majesty said little himself, and was extremely cautious of betraying any sentiment, feeling, or opinion he might entertain upon any provision or feature of the Reform Bill, or the possibility of resorting to the exercise of his prerogative towards enabling his Government to carry it.

Lord Wharncliffe repeated much of what he said to me. He assured His Majesty that he had never been opposed to a measure of moderate Reform: on the contrary, that he had supported the partial arrangements which had been proposed during former Administrations, and resisted by them. He also stated, as a proof of his disposition to facilitate, rather than to impede, the settlement of this anxious question, that he had earnestly promoted the meeting in the City, and the object for which it was called, and which was defeated by the violence of —— on the one side, and the folly of —— on the other. He expressed, in the strongest terms, his unwillingness to abandon the hope of an accommodation while it seemed to exist in the slightest degree; and offered this and the urgency of many others who shared that feeling as his excuse for the liberty he had taken, of which he stated that he had apprised your Lordship by last night's post.

The points of objection to the Bill which he urged were, the representation of the metropolitan districts; the non-exclusion of the influence of represented towns from county elections; the representation of any towns by single members, the 10*l.* householders not being effectual.

These are given as stated to me by the King, who observed that the last item had, he believed, been already set right.

His Majesty gave no opinion upon any of these points, or upon any part of the Bill, principle or detail, observing that he could not commit himself in the discussion of a measure upon which he would have to decide, on the best advice which could be submitted to him by those who were officially responsible for giving it: That he had come to the Throne at a period of great difficulty, but with his judgment happily unfettered by party prejudice: That he had continued the Duke of Wellington and his colleagues in the situations in which he found them, had been satisfied with their proceedings, and had regretted their retirement, which could not be ascribed to any absence or diminution of his support: That he had invariably acted upon the same principle towards your Lordship, who had been called to his councils at a most critical period, and whose conduct had fully justified the confidence he reposed in you and the support he had given you, and which would be continued to you.

His Majesty further assured Lord Wharncliffe, that the manly and straightforward character of his proceedings had been duly appreciated by him, as it must be by the country at large; and that he gave him full credit for the correctness of feeling and motive which had induced him to seek the interview.

I saw Lord Wharncliffe as he left the King's room. He appeared much gratified by His Majesty's kind reception; but I am confident, from the little he said to me, that His Majesty had not committed himself, and from my knowledge of Lord Wharncliffe's honourable feeling, I am equally convinced that he would not seek to draw the King into the expression of an incautious word.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

I am very sorry to hear that you have again caught cold.

No. 309.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, January 12, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have had the honour to submit your Lordship's letter of yesterday * to the King, who was neither surprised nor sorry to learn that the Cabinet had not, in their meeting of yesterday, come to any conclusion upon the grave subject of their deliberations, which would admit of your communicating the result for His Majesty's consideration. The King is not surprised that his confidential servants should, individually or collectively, hesitate to advise him to resort to the strong measure in contemplation, while it can be avoided; and he is not sorry that they should take full time to weigh the merits of the question and its possible consequences. His Majesty will rejoice if it should be considered practicable to avert the necessity, but is prepared to act in the spirit of his letter to your Lordship of the 5th instant, if his confidential servants should finally decide upon advising him to make an addition to the House of Lords.

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* Missing.

The King observed that the remarks which your Lordship makes upon the necessity of bearing in view the *ultimate* effect of whatever may be *now* done, are in full accordance with the sentiments conveyed in his letter; and that, as this necessity is admitted to increase the *evil* of an addition to the House of Lords, it of course adds proportionably to the advantage which would attend the possible abandonment of the intention.

His Majesty will not expect to learn the result before Saturday morning.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 310.

Minute of Cabinet.

Jan. 13, 1832.

PRESENT:

The Lord Chancellor,
The Lord Privy Seal,
The Duke of Richmond,
The Earl of Carlisle,
The Earl Grey,
The Viscount Melbourne,
The Viscount Palmerston,
The Viscount Goderich,
The Viscount Althorp,
The Lord J. Russell,
Sir James Graham,
Mr. Stanley,
Mr. Grant.

Your Majesty's servants, having given their most serious consideration to the important matters which have formed the subject of your Majesty's late communications with Earl Grey, and to the observations made by your Majesty thereon, have agreed humbly to represent to your Majesty as follows:—

Deeply impressed with the present critical situation of public affairs, and fully participating in all your Majesty's anxiety upon it, their views have been directed to the best means of relieving the Government from the embarrassments, which in their effects, both on the foreign and domestic interests of the country, are so prejudicial to your Majesty's service.

The first object which in this view necessarily forces itself upon their attention, is the present unsettled state of the public mind, on the great and important question of Parliamentary Reform. The general and intense anxiety which is felt for the success of that measure, the disappointment which attended the rejection by the House of Lords, in the last Session of Parliament, of the Bill which had been carried through the House of Commons by a great and decisive majority, and the revived hope of a more successful issue of the measure now before Parliament, have produced a feeling throughout the country which, adverting to the possibility of a second failure, cannot be contemplated without the greatest apprehension.

It might be hoped that an increased majority of the House of Commons, strengthened by the undiminished force of public opinion, would have its natural effect in disposing the House of Lords to acquiesce in a measure so supported.

It is however, with great pain, that your Majesty's servants find themselves compelled to acknowledge that they have not, up to the present moment, obtained any information which would encourage them to hope that there will not still remain in the House of Lords, a considerable majority against the Bill which is now in its progress through the House of Commons.

They are duly sensible of the importance of the House of Lords as a separate and independent branch of legislature; of the high functions which it has to perform, and of the power with which it is invested for the preservation of the Constitution; of the duty which may at times be imposed upon it, of resisting popular clamour, and opposing a barrier to popular encroachments.

But it must be admitted that cases may occur in which the House of Lords continuing to place itself in opposition to the general wishes of the nation, and to the declared sense of the House of Commons, the greatest danger might arise, if no means existed of putting an end to the collision which such circumstances would produce, and which, while it continued, must unavoidably occasion the greatest evils, and in its final issue might involve consequences fatal on the one hand to public liberty, and to the power and security of the Government on the other.

It is with a view to a danger of this nature that the Constitution has given to the Crown the power of dissolving, or of making an addition to the House of Lords, by the exercise of the high prerogative of creating Peers, which has been vested in the King for this as well as for other important purposes.

By the first of these, if, in a difference between the two Houses, the House of Commons should not be supported by the Constituent Body, a return of representatives in unison with the public opinion may restore that harmony and agreement which are so essential to the general security. The second can only be resorted to for the purpose of producing a change of conduct in the House of Lords, when the opinion of the people, strongly and generally expressed and identified with that of their representatives, leaves no other hope of terminating the existing division.

It is in such an extreme case alone that, in the opinion of your Majesty's servants, this exercise of your Majesty's prerogative of creating Peers for such a purpose could be justified.

They are fully aware of the insuperable objections which would be opposed to it in less urgent circumstances. Even when called for by an imperious necessity, its evil as a precedent has not been overlooked by them; and nothing but the alternative in which they now find themselves placed, of resorting to it to prevent a collision which they see no other certain means of averting, or of leaving the public peace and the security of the Government exposed to all the dangers which are to be apprehended from a second rejection of the proposed Reform by the House of Lords, could have induced them to recommend it.

Should the circumstances thus brought under your Majesty's view incline your Majesty to adopt the opinion entertained by your Majesty's servants, that a necessity is likely to arise which may require this exercise of your Majesty's prerogative, on the grounds which have been stated, the mode, the time, and the extent of its application will be next to be considered.

And here your Majesty's servants feel it to be their duty, in the first place, humbly to represent that it appears to them that the extent to which the Peerage, in such a case as has been contemplated, should be augmented, must be adequate to the necessity of securing the object in view. To make a new creation of Peers, which should prove ultimately ineffectual for its purpose would obviously be productive of the most unfortunate consequence. The acknowledged evil of adding to the Peerage, to carry a particular measure, would be incurred, and the danger, which it was intended to prevent, would not be avoided.

The rejection of the Bill after such an attempt would be even more calamitous than if no new creation had taken place; and your Majesty's servants, in return for the generous confidence with which your Majesty has honoured them, are bound to state, without reserve or concealment, their deliberate conviction, that any augmentation of the numbers of the House of Lords, with the avowed intention of influencing its decision, would be unadvisable, unless your Majesty is prepared to carry it to the full extent, which the certain attainment of its object may eventually require.

Should this opinion obtain your Majesty's concurrence, the next point for consideration is the time and the manner in which it should be acted upon; and here your Majesty's servants have the satisfaction of expressing their agreement with your Majesty as to the propriety of avoiding, as much as possible, any permanent addition to the Peerage. In the paper of observations so graciously communicated by your Majesty to Earl Grey, your Majesty has been pleased to state that, 'if it is considered that twenty-one new creations might be eventually required, that number should be added at once.' To the soundness of this opinion, your Majesty's servants have no hesitation in subscribing, subject to the following observations :—

It has been the declared wish of your Majesty, as it has been that of your Majesty's servants, to avoid altogether, if possible, any further addition to the Peerage for the purpose of influencing the conduct of the House of Lords; or if an addition should ultimately be required by considerations deeply affecting the peace and safety of the country, to limit it within the bounds of a strict necessity.

In the present uncertain state of their information, they cannot take upon themselves to say, whether the addition of any given number of Peers would be sufficient, or whether it might not be more than the object in view would eventually demand.

Unwilling, therefore, to overstep the necessity of the case, they would humbly suggest the expediency of postponing any new creations till they shall have more accurate means, which, during the progress of the Bill through the House of Commons, they may hope to obtain, of judging to what extent they should be carried. In offering this advice, however, they beg further to represent to your Majesty, that they do so in full confidence that, when the time shall come, your Majesty will allow them the power of acting at once up to the exigency of the case.

In pursuing this course, your Majesty's servants would rejoice if the necessity of making an addition to the Peerage should be found less than it appears to be

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at present, and still more if it shall be possible to avoid it altogether. At all events it will appear that your Majesty's servants have not advised the adoption of such a measure till the last moment, and under the pressure of an extreme and unavoidable necessity.

Upon these grounds your Majesty's servants beg leave humbly to submit to your Majesty the following conclusions:—

First. That the expediency of making an addition to the Peerage upon the principles which have been stated, must depend upon your Majesty's being prepared to allow your servants the power of carrying it to the full extent which may be necessary to secure the success of the Bill, with which view it cannot be limited to any precise number at present.

Secondly. That if your Majesty shall be prepared for this consequence, the contemplated addition should be deferred till it may appear certain that, without such an addition, the strength of your Majesty's Government would be insufficient to bring to a successful issue the great measure, on which they believe the peace and safety of the country so essentially to depend. All which is humbly submitted by your Majesty's most dutiful subjects and servants.

No. 311.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

East Sheen, Jan. 14, 1832.

My dear Sir,—This accompanies the Minute of the Cabinet which I was last night commissioned by my colleagues to submit to His Majesty. I have to beg His Majesty to excuse the blots and erasures which have taken place in copying it, and which could only be remedied by detaining the messenger.

I trust the Cabinet will be found to have acted in conformity with His Majesty's decision in deferring, as long as possible, the creation of any new Peers, in the hope that the necessity of such an addition may be greatly diminished in its extent, if not altogether avoided. I hope also that we have to a certain degree met His Majesty's views in taking whatever measure may be ultimately required upon this matter at once. But if it is to be taken at all, and in this also I hope His Majesty will not disapprove of the advice humbly tendered to him, it appears clear that it should be made effectual for its purpose, and therefore His Majesty's servants have felt themselves bound to state frankly their opinion of the necessity of their being allowed to add eventually to the Peerage to the full extent which may be required, always professing their sincere and earnest desire to limit that extent within the narrowest bounds which may be consistent with its complete efficacy. I have added this explanation, though I think the Minute is not liable to doubt or mistake on this part of the question, in my anxiety that His Majesty should clearly understand the nature of the assurance which his confidential servants humbly trust that His Majesty, under these circumstances, will think them justified in soliciting.

I have to thank you for your letters of the 11th and 12th. Your account of Lord Wharncliffe's interview with the King is in substance what I expected. It has proved what indeed was made clear by what had previously passed, that the concessions required are such as could not be made by the Government. No single representation involves of course the extinction of Schedule B.; the alteration of the 10*l.* franchise would destroy the whole Bill; and the exclusion of the freeholders not residing in towns from votes in the counties would be opposed to the provisions of the Bill in respect to freemen, &c., and is, I believe, not a point much insisted on by anybody but Lord Wharncliffe. On the London districts you are already sufficiently possessed of my opinion. The statement in your letter of the 12th, of His Majesty's determination to give to his servants the power of meeting the present exigency in the way explained to me by His Majesty, in the interview with which he was pleased to honour me, and in his subsequent observations, is most satisfactory, though it was no more than I had anticipated from the candour and confidence with which His Majesty has always acted towards me since I have had the honour of being called to his councils. It is felt equally by my colleagues, and must always command our gratitude and devotion. And here I cannot help again repeating my anxious hope, that His Majesty will not disapprove, under the explanation we have given, the reserve which we have felt it necessary to make, of not being limited to any precise number in the creations which may eventually be found necessary.

I have not heard anything that throws more light on our prospects in the House of Lords. The opponents of the Bill are as active and as determined as ever, and boast confidently of their success as certain. My old friend Lauderdale, I hear, even talks of throwing out the Bill on the first reading.

I write in great haste not to detain the messenger; for the same reason I cannot take a copy of this letter, and shall be much obliged to you to return it to me for that purpose.

I have just been shocked at hearing the death of Colonel Brereton read to me. It is dreadful; but, under all the circumstances, not much to be wondered at.

Ever, &c. GREY.

P.S.—Lord Holland was obliged to remain here from an attack of gout when I went to town yesterday for the Cabinet; but he gives his entire adhesion to our unanimous decision. Lord Lansdowne is in Wiltshire; but I am authorised to state, from previous communications with him, that our advice to His Majesty will be approved by him.

No. 312.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Jan. 15, 1832.

My dear Lord,—Your Lordship's letter of the 13th instant, written after leaving the Cabinet, and which I had the honour of submitting to the King yesterday morning, had prepared His Majesty for the delay in the transmission of the Minute, respecting which indeed he by no means wished that there should be any hurry; and its length and importance will account for the time given to the consideration of the subject, and that required for the task of copying it, which was imposed upon you.

The messenger arrived about half-past six yesterday afternoon, and I immediately carried the Minute and your Lordship's letter to the King, who, after reading them deliberately, and referring to what had passed at the period of your recent visit to him, gave me his instructions for the answer which I have now the honour to forward by his command.

His Majesty has ordered me to assure you that he is thoroughly sensible of your anxious study to consult, upon this trying occasion (and he believes it to be no less trying to yourself than it is to him), his wishes and his feelings, and to adopt and pursue, as far as may be possible, his views in the consideration of the important and difficult question which has agitated his mind, and been the object of the serious deliberation of his confidential servants; and His Majesty appreciates as he ought the solicitude you have shown, to offer individually every explanation which the Minute might seem to require, although he agrees with you that it is not liable to doubt or mistake on its chief and most striking feature; and that while it calls for extraordinary power, it expresses clearly the sincere and earnest desire to limit its exercise and its extent within the narrowest bounds which circumstances may allow. But this does not, and cannot, in His Majesty's apprehension, divest the grant of its uncertainty, inasmuch as this contingency is not at the discretion of those to whom the power is confided; and aware, as your Lordship is, from what you observed here of His Majesty's general feeling on this subject, of adding to the Peerage upon this occasion, you cannot be surprised at the strong expression of it in his letter of this date.

I have not seen Lord Wharncliffe since he was with the King. He dined here yesterday, meeting Lord Sefton and others, but I was not of the party, and His Majesty told me that no allusion was made to any matter of public, or rather political, interest.

I am perfectly sensible of the difficulty, from all that has come within my knowledge and observation, of coming to any previous accommodation with the opponents to the Bill. They expect not only concessions but a pledge for concessions, which you do not feel that you can, without a sacrifice of honour and principle, make and give; and they are unwilling otherwise to commit themselves, so far even as to allow the Bill to go into Committee. Besides this, it would not seem, from anything that has appeared, that they are united in purpose, or in any view of the question, except a general objection to points which you are not prepared to concede; and although I believe Lords Wharncliffe and Harrowby, and some others, to be sincerely disposed to conciliate and to bring this question to a satisfactory issue, and equally disposed afterwards to support the Government, I do not believe that they are agreed with the majority of the opponents on some of the essential features of the Bill, and I fear that many of that majority are violent in their feeling of opposition. But although it may not be possible to disarm them, it still would be very desirable to blunt their weapons, or to deprive them of any fair justification for having retained them, by introducing, as far as may be practicable and consistent, such further modifications as may not be derogatory to the principle and the efficiency of the Bill, and may be generally admitted to be amendments.

I had forgotten to say, that although Lord Lansdowne and Lord Holland did not assist at the meeting of Cabinet, His Majesty is perfectly satisfied as to their concurrence in the Minute.

May I beg you will do me the favour of telling Lord Holland, that I will endeavour to thank him by post for his obliging and satisfactory letter. I could not do so yesterday, for, besides the ordinary business which is never light, I had to look over the Privy Purse's accounts for the quarter, and to see a gentleman on the unpleasant business of ——; and in the evening I had to write the draft and the fair copy of His Majesty's long letter, which occupied me until three this morning.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

I return your letter to me as you desired.

No. 313.

The King to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Jan. 15, 1832.

The King received yesterday evening the Minute of a meeting of his confidential servants held on the 13th instant, transmitted to him by Earl Grey.

Important as is the subject, and serious as are the points submitted for his consideration and decision in this communication, they have too long engaged His Majesty's anxious attention, and presented themselves to his mind in every form in which they could be offered, to impose upon him the necessity of hesitating in the view which he is called upon to take of it, or of keeping Earl Grey and his colleagues in suspense as to the result of that view.

The Minute represents most ably and clearly the state and condition of public affairs, the situation of the country, and the general circumstances which, in the opinion of His Majesty's confidential servants, have reduced them to the painful necessity of submitting the advice which it conveys; and the King is not disposed to dispute the correctness of the reasoning, or the soundness of the argument, by which this advice is supported, always however with the reserve that it is applicable to the *existing* contingencies, and that the decision must be made upon due consideration of present circumstances, and of the necessity of incurring a serious evil in order to avert one which may prove yet more serious.

This, therefore, is the ground to be taken; this the rule of conduct; and it is unnecessary that His Majesty should seek for any other in the discussion of what is advanced in the first part of the Minute. He will limit himself to two observations. First, that when the present measure of Reform was proposed to him in February last, he stated his apprehensions of the collision which has taken place between the two Houses of Parliament, and deprecated it in strong terms. Secondly, that however desirable it is, in his opinion, to put an end to such collision, His Majesty cannot, under any circumstances, consent to undervalue the importance of the House of Lords as a separate and independent branch of the Legislature, nor lose sight of the high functions which it has to perform, and of the power with which it is invested for the preservation of the Constitution; and he declares that he looks to that House principally, and to its high, honourable, and loyal elements, for the support of the Monarchy, and for the exertion of due vigour in resisting popular clamour and in opposing a barrier to popular encroachments.

Hence it appears to His Majesty a duty which he owes to the country as well as to himself, its Sovereign, to preserve the character and dignity and the hereditary constitution of the House of Lords and of the Peerage; and this is the principle on which he is determined to act in his endeavour to meet the exigency of the moment by the adoption of such measures as may tend not only to the preservation of the peace of the country, but also to secure its interests, at this critical period, from the prejudice to which they would be exposed from any change in the Administration.

To secure the Reform Bill against a second rejection in the House of Lords, and the country against the consequences apprehended from such result, the King is called upon to sanction an augmentation of the Peerage, to consent to an exercise of the prerogative for purposes and to an extent for which no precedent can be found of more recent date than the reign of Queen Anne.

The question now formally submitted to him was recently brought under his consideration by Earl Grey, and all its bearings and every contingency were stated by him with the correctness and the candour which have invariably distinguished his proceedings and his communications. His Majesty resolved to meet him in the same spirit. He did not seek to blink the question. He stated fairly his view of it, and also the extent to which he might be induced to concede; and he now declares his readiness to give to Earl Grey, and to his other confidential servants, the full and positive benefit of such implied assent.

This embraced, as does the Minute of Cabinet, the time, the extent, and the mode of the application of the proposed exercise of the Prerogative. His Majesty understood and required that it should not be resorted to while there existed a hope of averting its necessity. He objected to its being made in so limited a degree as to incur the risk of its proving ultimately ineffectual; and therefore stated that, if it be considered that twenty-one Peers might be eventually required, that number should be added at once. And he stated that the addition should be effected, *exclusively*, by calling up the eldest sons or collateral heirs to Peerages, where no direct heirs are likely to succeed; with the exception of two creations previously agreed to by him, and one considered, on other grounds, free from objection.

But when the King entered into this question, and showed the extent to which he might be considered prepared to concede, he did so upon the presumption (which, however, he admits not to have rested upon any assurance given to him), that the utmost number required would not exceed twenty-one, or at least not much exceed twenty-one; and that he was thus required to exercise his prerogative with a limitation, and not to an undefined extent; and it is impossible that he should not feel that there is a wide difference between that previous understanding and the case now submitted for his decision.

It is now stated, 'that the expediency of making an addition to the Peerage must depend upon His Majesty's *being prepared to allow to his servants the power of carrying it to the full extent which may be necessary to secure the success of the Bill, with which view it cannot be limited to any precise number at present.*'

In other words, the King is required to surrender into the hands of his Ministers this important prerogative, to be exercised and applied without any other reserve or limit than that which their calculation or anticipation of the difficulties or opposition they may have to encounter shall produce: nor does the unrestricted surrender of this prerogative derive security from the character of those to whose honour and discretion His Majesty would not hesitate to confide it, inasmuch as the limits of its exercise must be dependent on circumstances, on contingencies of which the estimate may be precarious and uncertain, and which may therefore lead to an extension of the evil, far greater than His Majesty or his responsible advisers could ever have contemplated.

The King has stated freely his view of the question as now submitted to him, and has done so because he conceives that he owes it to himself and to his confidential servants not to shrink from the avowal of his sentiments; but, having done so, he will not, after having allowed that the resource should be effectual, and having, indeed, insisted upon the absurdity of incurring any risk by an insufficient addition to the House of Lords, if resorted to at all, deny to his

Ministers the power 'of acting at once up to the full exigency of the case;' it being understood that the contemplated addition shall be deferred till it may appear certain that, without such addition, the strength of the Government would be insufficient to bring the measure of Parliamentary Reform to a successful issue.

But His Majesty cannot give this pledge, nor consent to this surrender of the exercise of his prerogative, without attaching to it the positive and irrevocable condition, that the *creations of new Peers* shall, under no circumstances, exceed the three to which he has already agreed, namely, of Lord Francis Osborne, Mr. Dundas, and Sir John Leach; that the other additions shall be made by calling up eldest sons, or collateral heirs of Peerages where no direct heirs are likely to succeed, without reference to the objection which has been made, of throwing open the representation of counties or boroughs, which, if suffered to prevail, would have the effect of excluding many of those whom His Majesty considers the most eligible; that if these sources should prove insufficient (which, however, His Majesty can hardly conceive possible), recourse may be had to the Scotch and Irish Peerage for promotion to the English Peerage on this occasion, but that the selection shall be made from the oldest and most distinguished houses, so as not to detract from the value of the translation.

In attaching these conditions to his assent, it is His Majesty's object to preserve the character and respectability of the Peerage of this country, and to relieve it from the pressure of a *permanent* evil.

His Majesty is satisfied, from an inspection of the lists, that, in subjecting his assent to the observance of a principle which he considers correct, and which he is therefore in duty bound to maintain, he does not require that which is unreasonable or impracticable, and therefore that he does not place his Government under embarrassment.

Even the throwing open the representations of counties and boroughs ought not to be objected to, when so much stress is laid upon the feeling throughout the country in favour of the present Reform Bill, and upon the general and intense anxiety which is felt for the success of the measure, as a fair opportunity will be thus afforded to the people of proving that His Majesty's Government have not been deceived in their estimate of that feeling.

The King cannot close this communication without making a remark which has frequently occurred to him, although he may not have heretofore expressed it, but which may account in some degree for the extreme reluctance with which he has yielded to the proposal, that an addition to the House of Lords should be made for the purpose of carrying a Reform of the House of Commons.

It has always appeared to His Majesty that the creation of Peers, under the direct influence of the Crown and the Government, for the avowed purpose of obtaining a majority in the House of Lords, is altogether inconsistent with the principle on which the measure of Reform is professed to be introduced. and with its main feature, the abolition of nomination, or, as vulgarly called, rotten boroughs, inasmuch as nomination votes are created and introduced into the House of

Lords for the purpose of overpowering the independent voice of the House; and the character and integrity of the higher branch of the Legislature are thus sacrificed to the reform of the lower.

WILLIAM R.

No. 314.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Jan. 15, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have been honoured with the King's commands to address your Lordship by letter, upon a subject which has already been that of verbal communication here, and also between you and Lord Albemarle.

It has been represented to the King, that the departments of the Lord Steward and the Lord Chamberlain stand in need of aid from the Civil List, to enable them to reduce the amount of their existing excesses, and to assist their current expenditure, so as to enable them to proceed without incurring further excess. It has been also represented to His Majesty, that surplusses have accrued in the departments of the Master of the Horse and the Master of the Robes.

His Majesty therefore wishes that, conformably to the provisions of the Act of Parliament (cap. 25. sec. 7), made 'for the support of His Majesty's household and of the honour and dignity of the Crown,' the surplus of the Master of the Horse should be appropriated in aid of the Lord Steward's department, and the surplus of the Master of the Robes in aid of the Lord Chamberlain's.

The King is aware that the Act authorises the appropriation of the surplus sums to His Majesty's Privy Purse; but His Majesty is so anxious that the departments of the Lord Steward and Lord Chamberlain should be preserved from exceeding, that His Majesty is unwilling to think of any other appropriation of these funds, until these departments shall be free from excess, and enabled to bear the pressure of their respective charges.

His Majesty therefore requests that your Lordship will order that directions may be given to the departments respectively which have surplusses, to transfer them to the departments of the Lord Steward and the Lord Chamberlain.

I have, &c. H. Taylor.

No. 315.

Earl Grey to the King.

East Sheen, Jan. 16, 1832.

Earl Grey presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and has the honour of acknowledging the receipt of your Majesty's most gracious answer to the Minute of Cabinet which Earl Grey had the honour of transmitting to your Majesty on Saturday the 14th. Earl Grey will communicate it to your Majesty's other confidential servants to-morrow, when they will be summoned to meet for that purpose. In the meantime Earl Grey trusts that your Majesty will not disapprove of his submitting to your Majesty individually the following observations:—

Earl Grey must at once subscribe to your Majesty's opinion, that the important question which has been the subject of the late communications between your Majesty and your confidential servants must be considered with a view to existing contingencies, and that it must be decided upon the most careful estimate of the difficulties to which it is on each side exposed. And in confirmation of this, Earl Grey begs leave humbly to remind your Majesty, that it has from the outset of these discussions been admitted by his colleagues and himself, that an augmentation of the Peerage for the purpose of influencing the House of Lords on a particular question would be exposed to objections, which could only be overcome by the necessity of providing, where no other means of doing so could be found, against a great and imminent danger.

In proposing to your Majesty a reform of Parliament, Earl Grey was influenced by an opinion, that the consideration of that question could be no longer postponed; and your Majesty was graciously pleased to admit, under the circumstances which existed when your Majesty did him the honour of calling him to your Councils, that with his declared opinions it would have been impossible for him to accept office on any other terms. It was, indeed, apprehended by your Majesty, that a collision between the two Houses on this measure might take place; but this was a danger inseparable from the proposal of the measure, and warranted by experience in hoping, that if it was supported by the House of Commons, and by the declared sense of a great majority of your Majesty's subjects, the House of Lords would acquiesce, it was decided with your Majesty's concurrence that a Bill, which was previously submitted in all its details to your Majesty, should be proposed to Parliament.

Their sense of the high attributes of the House of Lords has already been expressed to your Majesty by your confidential servants, and by Earl Grey individually, in a manner which Earl Grey trusts can have left no doubt on your Majesty's mind of their zeal in the support of an institution so essential to the maintenance of the power of the Crown, and of the rights of the people. One of its most important functions, as has been stated in the Cabinet Minute, is to resist popular clamour, and to oppose a barrier to popular encroachments. But a general and prevailing expression of public opinion must not be confounded with an unreasonable and temporary excitement. Even the most arbitrary Government cannot safely bid defiance to the prevailing sentiment of a whole nation; and unfortunate indeed would be the time if it should ever arrive, when the House of Lords, by a pertinacious opposition to the declared sense of the House of Commons and of the people, should bring its privileges into question, as being used more for the purposes of their separate advantage, than for the general good.

Earl Grey will not conceal from your Majesty his apprehension, that things are now tending to that result, and that the safety of the House of Lords itself depends upon the issue of the Bill now in its progress through the House of Commons. For the acknowledgment of your Majesty, that in bringing these matters under your Majesty's consideration, Earl Grey has acted with the candour which his duty prescribed, and for the gracious expressions with which that acknowledgment had been made, Earl Grey feels deeply grateful. In his communications with your Majesty, Earl Grey certainly did not at any time mention a larger creation of Peers than twenty-one. But in stating his expectations that there might be a difference of twenty in favour of the Government on the next division, he also apprised your Majesty that this expectation rested on no certain data, and that it did not extend to the Committee; the object then being, by an addition to the House of Lords to secure the passing of the Bill, the necessary amount of such an addition could only be ascertained by more accurate information: and on considering this matter in the Cabinet, it appeared to your Majesty's servants for the reasons stated in their Minute, that to create an insufficient number would be to incur a double evil, and that it would be better to create none, than to leave the event subject to doubt or hazard. It was on this ground that the idea which had at first presented itself to Earl Grey of a partial creation, as indicative of power and resolution, was given up; and adopting your Majesty's opinion, it was thought better that the whole creation should take place at once, and that it should be deferred till the last possible moment. This necessarily left the number indefinite, and between an indefinite and a given number there certainly is a great difference. But Earl Grey trusts that your Majesty, taking into your view all the circumstances which have influenced your Majesty's servants in making this proposition, will see that there is nothing in it which is inconsistent with the principle of adding to the Peerage on the ground before submitted to your Majesty; or that your Majesty's servants could have presumed to ask any surrender of your Majesty's prerogative, which would deprive your Majesty of the control which your Majesty ought to possess over the measures of your Government. It is true that the increased number of the Peerage, should that measure be resorted to, must depend upon the strength of the opposition in the House of Lords, over which your Majesty's Ministers have no power; and it is this very circumstance which makes it impossible for your Majesty's Ministers at present to state what the necessary number may be; but Earl Grey still anxiously cherishes the hope that it may not exceed, or, at all events, not greatly exceed, the number before mentioned to your Majesty, and greatly will he rejoice if it shall be ultimately found to be less. When the idea of a partial creation, in the first instance, was submitted to your Majesty by Earl Grey, he undoubtedly at the same time recommended, for the reasons he then stated, that it should be confined to the eldest sons not in Parliament; but that proposal falls to the ground with that of the partial promotion itself. In a general one, the eldest sons whose claims are the highest must necessarily be selected, whether they at present have seats in the House of Commons or not. Earl Grey has no fear of the result of any popular elections, except that which may arise from the unwillingness of the best candidates to spend money to secure a seat, which, if the Bill succeeds, can only be held for a very short period. This circumstance might possibly, in some places, afford an opening to persons who, in a different state of things, would have no chance of success.

Earl Grey was fully aware of your Majesty's objection to any creations except from the three classes, of eldest sons, collateral heirs of childless Peers, or Peers of Scotland and Ireland; and he does not feel himself authorised to say anything in opposition to your Majesty's opinion on this point. But he trusts it will not be thought inconsistent with the deference which he owes to such a declaration of your Majesty's opinion, to suggest with all humility, in looking to the future character and dignity of the House of Lords, which it so naturally and so justly is your Majesty's most anxious wish to support, that perhaps that object may be more effectually promoted by the addition of Commoners of ancient families and great wealth, than by that of Irish and Scotch Peers, to many of whom not now possessing seats in the House of Lords the latter advantage does not belong. This consideration, however, is only humbly submitted, without being pressed upon your Majesty.

Upon the concluding remarks in your Majesty's letter, Earl Grey would humbly submit this observation. In the first place, that there is a fundamental difference between a representative and an hereditary assembly, and that the patron of a close borough has over his nominee, falsely called a representative of the people, an influence which is always active and operating. An addition to the House of Lords may be said to overcome the independent will of that assembly as constituted at the present moment, on a particular measure. But it is to be remembered, that the new Peers will hold their seats by as independent a tenure as the old ones; and if properly selected, though the number may be inconveniently increased, will not detract from the general respect due to the House of Lords as composed of subjects of eminent station and large property.

Earl Grey has to offer many excuses for having so long trespassed upon your Majesty's attention. He has been led to do so, that his motives in every part of these transactions may be clearly understood by your Majesty. In conclusion he has only further to express his grateful sense, which he is confident will be shared by all his colleagues, of your Majesty's confidence and favour, in allowing your servants 'the power of acting up to the full exigency of the case, it being understood that the contemplated addition shall be deferred till it may appear certain that, without such addition, the strength of the Government will be insufficient to bring the measure of Parliamentary Reform to a successful issue.'

All which, &c. GREY.

No. 316.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, Jan. 16, 1832.

My dear Sir,—I have to acknowledge your letter of yesterday, accompanying the King's answer to the Minute of Cabinet, and also your two letters which I have received by the post this morning.

With respect to the first, I don't know that I have any thing material to add to the letter which I wrote to His Majesty before I left Sheen this morning. Knowing how much alive His Majesty is to all the difficulties connected with the subject which has been lately under discussion, I must feel doubly grateful for the strong proof of confidence shown by His Majesty in consenting to adopt the proposition contained in the last communication of his confidential servants.

I thought it my duty to submit to His Majesty the observation which I have made in my letter of this date, with respect to the limitation of the new creations, should any be made, to the three classes which have been so repeatedly defined; but, as I stated at the same time, without meaning to press it upon His Majesty. I am not aware of any further difficulty as likely to arise on this point; but if there should, it will be the duty of the Lord Chancellor and myself to wait upon His Majesty at Brighton whenever he may command our attendance.

I have a letter from Lord Lansdowne this morning, in which he says that he does not think the Council for appointing the new Sheriffs can be held before the end of the month. I would therefore propose to His Majesty, that it should take place on Tuesday the 31st, if that day would be convenient to His Majesty, when the Recorder's reports (I believe there will then be two due) and the appointment of the Fast may be settled at the same time.

I made yesterday a communication to Lord Albemarle on the subject of the payments from the savings of his department. I sent him a memorandum on the present state of the law, by which it appears that any saving upon the sums allotted to one department may be carried to another, but that no transfer of this description can be made to the Privy Purse till the account of all the classes can be balanced at the end of the year. I have, however, again desired Mr. Ellice to send me a full explanation of this matter, which I hope to receive before I close this letter.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 317.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Jan. 16, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have had the honour of submitting your Lordship's letter of yesterday * to the King, with that from the Lord Advocate enclosed, which I return, and for the communication of which His Majesty orders me to thank you.

His Majesty read it with great interest, and was particularly pleased with the account it gives of the improved state of the manufacturing districts, especially Paisley, where so much distress had prevailed, and of the peaceable and orderly demeanour of the people at public meetings.

With regard to some other points, His Majesty receives the Lord Advocate's report as that of a very able and well informed man and acute observer, but yet as somewhat highly coloured by political feeling. That which relates to the *Unions* appears to His Majesty a subject of uneasiness, and he hopes that the Lord Advocate and others may be right in their anticipation of the eventual dissolution or insignificance of those associations as one of the results of the passing of the Reform Bill; but it is impossible that His Majesty should not apprehend that what has been introduced and established for one purpose will be kept up or re-established for any other which may hereafter occur to those 'whose views are inconsistent with the principles of the Constitution, and who contemplate the formation of a power which could not co-exist with any regular Government.' Many of these Political Unions, for instance, owe their origin to the Trades Unions, combinations formed for illegal purposes; and although these may not be the designs of many influential and leading men now concerned, experience has always shown that the designing and mischievous are the most active and persevering, and that by degrees they work themselves into the control over their inferiors, and even their equals, which may in the first instance be given to others of better character and greater respectability. Thus in London Sir Francis Burdett, who wished to have kept things right, has been supplanted by Messrs. —— and ——, and this may be or prove the case elsewhere. Many of those concerned have already declared that they have ulterior views, and these will probably be more decidedly manifested, when the measure of Reform ceases to be a plea.. The influence which those Unions have shown in the maintenance of tranquillity appears to His Majesty the greatest source of uneasiness, inasmuch as it shows the power they can exercise, and which may at any time be exerted, for evil as well as good, and which is more to be dreaded from combinations spread over the country,

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* Missing.

'daily concerting and communicating with each other.' His Majesty has always viewed the power which Mr. O'Connell and other agitators have occasionally exerted in dispersing mobs and sending them peaceably to their homes, to be that which must be considered as most pregnant with danger to the State; and, for those various reasons, to the expression of which the Lord Advocate's letter has given rise, His Majesty looks to the early suppression of these Political Unions with continued anxiety.

The King has ordered me to acquaint your Lordship that he gave audiences to Lords Verulam and Salisbury separately this day, and that little was said by them which is not to be found in the address presented by the former, which I have sent to Lord Melbourne, they having intimated that they concurred in the sentiments and opinions it expresses. Lord Verulam's were, however, not stated so strongly as Lord Salisbury's. The King was very civil to them, but very guarded in all he said. I have not had any conversation with them, but shall meet them at dinner at the Pavilion.

The King has ordered me to send your Lordship the copy of a letter from Lord Kinnoul, and to say that he has appointed him to-morrow, notwithstanding the representation recently made by Lord Melbourne, of which you are probably aware. His Majesty has understood that Lord Kinnoul is undecided as to the line he may take on the Reform Bill, and was therefore advised to show him some attention, which has been done. If His Majesty had declined to give an audience for the purpose of presenting this address from the county of Perth, and had referred him to the Secretary of State, after having recently received others, the effect probably would have been to convert him into a determined opponent. He would have personally offended his Lordship, and prejudiced his Government, and still more so if he had assigned as a reason that he had been *advised* to resume the usual course. He, therefore, trusts that you will consider that he has used a sound discretion.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

I have given the 'Chelsea Gazette' to His Majesty.

No. 318.

Minute of Cabinet.

Foreign Office, Jan. 17, 1832.

At a meeting of your Majesty's servants assembled this day,

PRESENT:

The Lord Chancellor,
The Lord President,
The Lord Privy Seal,
The Duke of Richmond,
The Earl of Carlisle,
The Earl Grey,
The Lord Holland,
The Lord J. Russell,
The Viscount Melbourne,
The Viscount Goderich,
The Viscount Palmerston,
The Viscount Althorp,
Sir J. Graham,
Mr. Stanley,
Mr. Grant.

Earl Grey communicated to your Majesty's servants your Majesty's most gracious letter in answer to their Cabinet Minute of the 13th, and also the letter addressed to your Majesty yesterday by Earl Grey.

Having taken these papers into their most serious consideration; they beg leave to express to your Majesty their concurrence in the observations submitted to your Majesty by Earl Grey, and in the grateful feelings which your Majesty's gracious acquiescence in the advice humbly offered to your Majesty in the Cabinet Minute of the 13th inst. could not fail to inspire.

All which, &c.

No. 319.

The King to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Jan. 17, 1832.

The King will not wait for any further communication from Earl Grey, which may result from the meeting of his other confidential servants, which he has stated to His Majesty that he would summon for this day to reply to the letter he received from him this morning. He is indeed too sensible of the value of Earl Grey's individual opinions and observations, and of the attention which is due to them, not to feel the propriety and the necessity of noticing them distinctly. Nor are the considerations which have produced them such as His Majesty could pass over, without losing sight of the obligations which his station and the peculiar circumstances of this eventful period impose upon him.

Earl Grey and the King appear to agree that the subject of their late communications must be considered with a view to existing contingencies, and according to a careful estimate of the difficulties to which it is on each side exposed. His Majesty has, indeed, never varied in this opinion; he has always stated it; and he has admitted that he has been guided by this view, and by the principle arising out of it, in subscribing to much which would otherwise have ill-accorded with sentiments early imbibed, and with feelings and prejudices which he has considered it his duty to sacrifice to necessity.

The King's general sentiments upon this question of Reform, and upon the contingencies attached to it, as well as the progress of its discussion, were so clearly and candidly stated in His Majesty's letter of the 24th of April last, written immediately after he had sanctioned the dissolution of Parliament, thereby evincing his determination to support his Government to the utmost of his power, that he cannot do better than refer Earl Grey to that letter, and desire that, upon this occasion, the attention of his confidential servants may be particularly called to it.

His Majesty readily admits his conviction of the reluctance with which Earl Grey has approached the question of an augmentation of the Peerage, and he has never ceased to give him credit for an anxious desire to abstain from proposing it, unless driven to it by the necessity of providing against a second failure, which His Majesty agrees with him in considering to be, under existing circumstances, pregnant with a great and imminent danger.

Of the sentiments of others of his confidential servants upon this question His Majesty could not be apprised, until he received the Minute of Cabinet of the 13th; and this conveyed the assurance of their unanimous concurrence in the advice therein offered to His Majesty, for the augmentation of the Peerage for the purpose of influencing the House of Lords on the Reform Bill.

The King has never denied, nor is he disposed to deny, that, when he called Lord Grey to his Councils, he considered him and admitted him to be pledged to the introduction of a Reform of Parliament. His Majesty had felt desirous, and had stated his wish, that the consideration of this 'perilous' question should be delayed; but he expressed himself satisfied with the reasons assigned by Earl Grey for not postponing its introduction, and for not allowing more time for consideration and deliberation. But His Majesty's early apprehension of a possible collision between the two Houses was not lessened during the progress of the Bill, and Earl Grey cannot have forgotten that His Majesty's estimate of the probable majority against the measure in the Lords was greater than that which had been formed by his Government. His Majesty cannot have given a stronger proof of his acknowledgment of the sense entertained by Earl Grey and his other confidential servants of the high attributes of the House of Lords, than by the adoption of the very words of their minute which described them; and he attaches too much importance to it to feel that they are not applicable to circumstances of a general, as well as to circumstances of a temporary, nature. He is ready, indeed, to allow, that even the most arbitrary Government cannot safely bid defiance to the prevailing sentiment of a whole nation; but His Majesty cannot allow that the opposition which has been made by the House of Lords, or by a portion of the House of Commons, or by other portions and classes of the people to the proposed measure of Reform, is illegitimate or unconstitutional, or that it partakes of an arbitrary principle.

His Majesty cannot forget that the question has long, very long, been the subject of discussion, and of great difference of opinion; that the sentiments of the ablest statesmen have been divided upon it during the annual recurrence of the discussion; and that the extraordinary excitement which has attended its recent agitation may be traced, in no slight degree, to co-existing and co-operating causes. His Majesty cannot admit that the opinions of a large portion of the most respectable class of his subjects are not opposed to the present measure of Reform, at least to its proposed extent; while there is a majority against it in the House of Lords, a respectable portion of the House of Commons opposed to it, and while this feeling is by no means confined to the individuals so assembled. His Majesty cannot, therefore, admit that those who oppose the Bill are bidding defiance to the sentiment of *a whole nation*, or that the House of Lords can incur the imputation of using their privileges more for the purposes of their separate advantage than for the general good, upon a question which has so long been the subject of great difference of opinion in the country and in its legislative assemblies, and which is still contemplated in such various lights, by Lords and Commons, and by other classes of the people.

But His Majesty has allowed that the anxiety for the success of the measure which seems to pervade the great mass of the population, and the feeling which has been manifested throughout the country, whether its existence shall be permanent or temporary, have produced a state of things which renders the passing of the Reform Bill an object of extreme importance to the peace and tranquillity of the country, while he is sensible that it is equally essential towards another object, to which His Majesty attaches the highest value, namely, the continuance of his present Ministers in the exercise of duties which they have discharged so much to his satisfaction and to their own credit.

It is not necessary that His Majesty should enter further into the grounds on which he has subscribed to the advice of his confidential servants with respect to an augmentation of the Peerage, all that has recently passed having shown that the number to be added must depend upon the strength of the opposition in the House of Lords; and as he is satisfied, from what Earl Grey has submitted, that it is impossible for his Ministers to state what the necessary number may be.

His Majesty, however, rejoices to learn, that the idea of confining the selection to eldest sons not in Parliament is admitted to have fallen to the ground with that of the partial promotion itself, as His Majesty is, upon principle, a decided advocate for the selection of those whose claims are the highest. He considers that the unwillingness to spend money to secure a seat which, if the Bill succeed, can only be held for a very short period, must be felt by both parties, and will therefore produce its own remedy; and, at any rate, the loss of seats can no longer affect the issue of the Bill in the House of Commons.

His Majesty will readily waive his idea of extending the selection to Scotch or Irish Peers, if the eldest sons or collateral heirs of English Peers shall afford a sufficient number; but he retains his decided objection to the *creation* of any others than Lord Francis Osborne and Mr. Dundas; and this is a point to which, in consenting to such exercise of his prerogative, His Majesty has attached so much importance, that he trusts it will not be considered necessary to urge him to abandon it.

Earl Grey will observe that His Majesty has not, in any part of this letter, shown the smallest inclination to recede from or retract aught that he had previously agreed to; and although he has stated his sentiments upon the general subject without reserve, he trusts that the different view he may take of certain contingencies which are connected with the course pursued, and the decision to be made, cannot be construed into the most distant desire to withhold the sanction which he had given to that course, or into the slightest diminution of the confidence which he reposes in his Government.

The King has only to say further, that he admits 'the fundamental difference between a representative and a hereditary assembly,' but that the House of Lords must be considered as losing, for the time, the benefit of its hereditary constitution and independence, whenever any addition is made, under the direct influence of the Government, for the purpose of carrying any particular object.

The individuals brought in upon that principle cannot be viewed as *independent*, although they may eventually become so; and so often as this expedient is resorted to (and the example may become catching), the objection must apply, and must, in His Majesty's opinion, detract from the general respect due to the House of Lords, and from the value of those high attributes of which His Majesty's confidential servants acknowledge their sense. The influence exercised, or the reward given for the vote, becomes naturally greater in proportion to the value of the benefit conferred; and therefore the objection to the creation of Peers is more striking than that to calling up eldest sons, which is merely an anticipation of that which they would receive in due course, and does not add *permanently* to the Peerage, nor affect its *hereditary* character.

WILLIAM R.

Jan. 18.

P. S.—The King has this morning received, with much satisfaction, the Minute of the meeting of his confidential servants held yesterday, transmitted by Earl Grey.

WILLIAM R.

No. 320.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Jan. 18, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have had the honour of submitting your Lordship's letter of the 16th to the King, but was unable to answer it yesterday, as I was engaged the greater part of the evening in writing the draft, and the fair copy of His Majesty's reply to yours which I beg to forward herewith. The King has entered so fully into every part of the question, and was so particular in the instructions given for the observations made in his letter, that I need not trouble your Lordship with any thing further on that subject, than to say that, upon reading the Minute of Cabinet, His Majesty observed that it is conclusive, and will render unnecessary any personal discussion with your Lordship and the Lord Chancellor.

The King orders me to say that Tuesday the 31st inst. will suit him as well as any other day, for holding a Council, and he desires that it may be so appointed in due time; but the notice had better be short, otherwise His Majesty will be inundated with applications for audiences. They are, indeed, becoming very inconvenient and frequently embarrassing, and yet the declining them would, in many cases, create great soreness of feeling, and be liable to misinterpretation.

Lord Kinnoul, who presented the address from the county of Perth, stated that he could not avoid doing so in his character of Lord-Lieutenant, although he does not concur in the greater part of the sentiments it expresses. His language was indeed friendly, and he unequivocally admitted the necessity of Reform of the representation, particularly in Scotland.

Lord Aylesbury has applied for an audience, and is coming this day, but I am ignorant of the object. And Lord Camden has also requested to be permitted to come here to present an address from Kent, as you will perceive by his letter which I enclose. Lord Camden is an old friend, has been in habits of great intercourse with the King, and His Majesty has not felt at liberty to hurt his feelings by declining his request; but

I cannot help saying that the *labour* of all this is trying to the King, as is the continual excitement.

The King is much obliged to you for your attention to the communication I was directed to make on the subject of the household excesses and surplusses, and has ordered me to say that the letter addressed to you by Mr. Ellice is perfectly satisfactory to him. I have kept it, in case of further reference or inquiry.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

P.S.—His Majesty orders me to add that Lord Aylesbury came to declare his entire concurrence in the sentiments of Lord Wharncliffe, of which he had understood His Majesty to be in full possession.

No. 321.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

Downing Street, Jan. 18, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I desired Mr. Wood yesterday to acknowledge your letter of the 16th, not having time to write myself. I now, therefore, sit down to acquit myself of that duty, though I am not aware that I have any thing material to add to what I have already written. Whatever allowance may be made for the colouring which strong political opinions may give to the statements of the Lord Advocate, they certainly will still afford matter for the most serious meditation. I have before told you that they are abundantly confirmed by what I hear from other quarters, and from some most impartial observers of passing events. From Lancashire the accounts are of the same description; the same present tranquillity, the same encouraging appearances of reviving trade, and the same patient expectation of the result of the Reform Bill, with the same determination in the event of its failure. His Majesty's opinion of the incompatibility of permanent establishments like that of the Unions with all regular Government must command the entire concurrence of every man who looks at these things in their true light. Their power of control, now exercised for a purpose that is temporarily useful, may be at any moment exerted in a manner that would be fatal to the peace of the country. We must, therefore, look with anxiety to the means of putting an end to these associations. To do so by law, or by an exertion of force, is very difficult; and undoubtedly in this, as well as in all similar cases, we must prefer the *suaviter in modo*, if it can be combined with the *fortiter in re.* I look therefore, with a sanguine hope, to the success of the measure of Reform. Even in that case I do not doubt, that there would be many who would wish to perpetuate and extend these Unions for other objects. But when the great object of Reform is carried, I have a confident belief that the middle and more influencing classes of the community would be separated from them; they would then become powerless and more easily dealt with.

I beg you will offer His Majesty my humble thanks for the communication you have made to me by his orders, of his having given audience to Lords Salisbury and Verulam.

* * * * *

After receiving them, it certainly could not be expected that His Majesty should refuse to Lord Kinnoul admission to his presence for the same purpose. I have myself had many addresses sent to me, with a request that I would present them in person; but not to trouble His Majesty unnecessarily, my answer has uniformly been, that the levees having been discontinued, no proper opportunity of doing so was afforded me, and that I had, therefore, transmitted them to the Home Secretary. And this, as it is the usual, would I think in general be the better course.

I have been all the morning at the Committee on Irish Tithes. It has afforded further evidence of the distressing and almost hopeless state of that question. I see no way but to fix the payment on the landlords. The name of tithes and all the misery of their collection would be avoided, and the landlord would be indemnified in the shape of rent. I hope that the Irish proprietors, seeing the danger and necessity of their situation, may consent to some arrangement of that nature; but I must add that all I know of them does not afford much encouragement to that hope.

I am, &c. GREY.

P. S.—Some mistake as to the appointment of the Welsh Sheriffs, in consequence of the change that has taken place in the judicature, will make it necessary to postpone the Council for another week. I have communicated this to-day to the Archbishop, and he must arrange his Fast accordingly.

No. 322.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Jan. 18, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have the honour, by the King's command, to send your Lordship a letter from the Duke of Buckingham, which His Majesty received this morning by post, to which I add his Grace's letter of transmission to me, and copy of my answer.

His Majesty will be obliged to you to return the letter at your leisure. He was much struck with the remarks it contains on Political Unions, the establishment of which your Lordship is aware that His Majesty views with extreme displeasure and suspicion.

* * * * *

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 323.

Earl Grey to the King.

Downing Street, Jan. 19, 1832.

Earl Grey presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and begs leave to offer to your Majesty his best thanks for your Majesty's letter of the 17th, and for the other communications through Sir H. Taylor, which he had the honour of receiving last night. When your Majesty has been graciously pleased to approve generally the advice offered to your Majesty by your confidential servants, it would ill-become Earl Grey to enter into any thing approaching to the nature of a controversial argument on some discrepancy in the views, which have not prevented your Majesty from acquiescing ultimately in those submitted to your Majesty by the Cabinet. Earl Grey thinks it, therefore, his duty to confine himself to an expression of his gratitude for the continued confidence which your Majesty has been pleased to repose in your present servants; and to beg your Majesty to be assured, that though he and any other person is liable to be misled by the information he receives, nothing but a conviction that it was founded on the most certain of evidence could have induced him to submit to your Majesty the statement which he has made of the general condition and feeling of the country. Earl Grey will certainly, in obedience to your Majesty's commands, lay before his colleagues your Majesty's letter of the 17th, and also that of the 24th of April, which your Majesty has ordered him to recall to their recollection.

With respect to what the Duke of Buckingham has represented to your Majesty respecting the Unions, Earl Grey does not think it necessary to trouble your Majesty further than to refer to the opinions which he has repeatedly ventured to express to your Majesty with respect to these institutions. Earl Grey has never concealed his apprehension of their mischievous tendency. But he must be permitted to deny the utter insufficiency of your Majesty's proclamation, so strongly insisted on by the Duke, at the same time that he must express his decided objection to the violent course which his Grace seems to recommend in the present state of these associations.

The question of augmenting the Peerage has been too fully discussed between your Majesty and your servants to make it necessary for Earl Grey to offer any further remarks upon it, in consequence of the Duke of Buckingham's extraordinary appeal to your Majesty on this subject. As to the declaration of his determined opposition both to the principle and the details of the Bill now before Parliament, however inconsistent it may be with the communication made, as it appeared at the time with his Grace's concurrence, by Lord Chandos to Sir H. Taylor, Earl Grey will only say that he is not at all surprised at a determination which he has been long convinced has been long made, and has not been at all altered, by his Grace and by those to whom he alludes as perfectly capable of conducting with facility the affairs of your Majesty's Government. It must be needless to add, that your Majesty's answer, as expressive of your continued confidence in him, has been most gratifying to Earl Grey.

All which, &c. GREY.

No. 324.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, Jan. 20, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I have this morning received your letter of yesterday. It gives me great pleasure to hear that what I said upon the subject of the Unions has met with His Majesty's approbation. In Ireland I think it not improbable that some new law, to give more power to the Government, and which may be more efficient than the Proclamation Act, which expired in consequence of the dissolution of Parliament, may be immediately required, and such a measure has been sent over for consideration. But all such measures ought to be carefully considered, and if possible avoided. In England I can have no doubt that it would be most impolitic to stir this matter at present, and I continue as sanguine as ever in my hope, that if the Reform Bill were passed, the general spring, of which there is every appearance, in the trade and commerce of the country, would render such measures unnecessary. We must always be prepared, however, for any exigency that may arise; and I entertain no opinion more strongly than this, that an evident reluctance in resorting to strong measures facilitates the means of carrying them, and adds to their efficiency when the necessity arrives.

But everything in this view depends upon the success, and in a great degree on the early success, of the Reform Bill; and here I am sorry to say that we receive fresh proofs of the determination of its implacable adversaries to avail themselves of any means, and to join even with those to whose views they are the most adverse, to defeat it. It is exactly the case of the Carlists and the Republicans in France. Yesterday Sheil had proposed to move an instruction to the Committee to make room for an addition of five Irish members. He communicated this as a thing he was obliged to do, in a friendly way, to the Ministers in the House of Commons. At first sight it appeared that it might have afforded the means of getting rid of the question at once. But it was instantly discovered that the Tories were prepared, contrary to their own principles, to support it; that Wetherall had even spoken to Sheil to concert with him the terms of the motion; and Croker spoke in favour of it, and in five minutes afterwards told Stanley that there was not the least claim of Ireland to a larger share of members. I give this as a specimen of the sort of opposition we have to deal with. Sheil afterwards altered the form of his motion to that of proposing an addition of six boroughs to Schedule A., for the purpose of adding to Ireland. This, I think, the Tories cannot support; but in the form in which it was first proposed, their union with the Irish and Scotch members, who are also calling out for an addition to Scotland, would not improbably, aided by the Radicals, have carried the question. At least the danger was too great to be risked.

Lord Aberdeen has given notice of a motion for Thursday next, as you will see, on the Belgian Treaty, with the avowed purpose of obtaining a declaration of the House against it before the ratification. I make no comment on this. I am not at all sure that Government may not be beaten upon it.

I hear, as you do, of Peers likely to vote for the second reading, or to stay away; but the facts I have been stating show how little ground we have for confidence in any of these statements.

I have a note from Lord Lansdowne proposing the first Monday in February for the Council, if it suits His Majesty's convenience. I have desired him not to issue the notice sooner than is absolutely necessary.

* * * * *

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 325.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Jan. 21, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have been favoured with your Lordship's letter of yesterday, which I have had the honour of submitting to the King.

His Majesty was not surprised to hear that you think that some new law will be required in Ireland, to give more power to the Government for the suppression of unlawful associations, and he is very sensible also of the importance of carefully considering those measures before they are promulgated: nor does His Majesty wish to hurry forward any proceeding in this country for the suppression of the Political Unions, being satisfied of your Lordship's earnest desire to effect it, whenever it can be done effectually, and without inconvenience. He sincerely hopes that, whenever the Reform Bill shall have passed, this and other matters may be fairly and fully entered into, and that those who are divided on that question will unite in resisting the designs and encroachments of the disaffected; and he quite agrees with you, that the apparent reluctance to resort to strong measures facilitates the means of carrying them, and renders them more efficient when the necessity becomes urgent.

His Majesty has learnt with great satisfaction, that the prospects of trade and commerce are brightening, and that this is not confined to the manufacturing towns in the North, but extends even to Spitalfields, as I hear from Mr. Ellice.

It is very provoking that, under such circumstances, the opposition to the Reform should become more active and rancorous, and that those who had professed a desire to conciliate, should act so little up to that spirit.

Lord Aberdeen's proposed motion is a very mischievous one, and one which is little justifiable, still less so as being made by a person who, from his former official situation, must be so well aware of the prejudice which it may do to the interests of the country in its foreign relations; but this is not the first instance of similar proceeding, and probably will not be the last.

The first Monday in February will suit His Majesty perfectly for the Council, and is indeed in many respects the most convenient day of the week for his going to London.

* * * * *

The King told me that Lord Camden, upon presenting the address from Kent yesterday, had expressed his concurrence in its sentiments, and had afterwards stated, in the most earnest and forcible terms, his alarm at the idea of His Majesty being prevailed upon to add to the Peerage, for the purpose of forcing the Reform Bill through the House of Lords; and had entreated His Majesty, as he valued his character, the interests of the country, and the authority and stability of the Monarchy, not to consent to a measure so fatal and degrading.

Lord Camden repeated to me this day what he had said to His Majesty, and I asked him whether he objected to my communicating to your Lordship that he had so expressed himself; to which he replied, on the contrary, that it was his wish that your Lordship should be apprised of his sentiments on the subject, and of his having expressed them to the King, as he felt himself in duty bound to do, as a Peer and a Privy Councillor, and as a friend and a warm supporter of the Monarchy; and that he had fully meant, if he had seen you in the House of Lords on Thursday, to have apprised you of his intention, and not seeing you there, had hesitated whether he should not do so by letter.

As you do not say anything about your health, I hope I may conclude that you have quite recovered from your indisposition.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 326.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

Downing Street, Jan. 21, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I write merely to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday.

You will have seen in the papers an account of the debate last night. I do not hear that there was anything remarkable in it, except the violent tone of Sir R. Peel's opposition. They seem determined to fight the Bill in all its stages as pertinaciously as the last. The list will show you that Lord Chandos voted against the Speaker's leaving the chair.

* * * * *

I consider myself as quite well again, though I have not yet been out.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 327.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Jan. 22, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have had the honour of submitting your Lordship's letter of yesterday to the King, who was very glad to learn from it that you considered yourself quite well again.

His Majesty had noticed the debate on Friday night on the Reform Bill, as offering no other features than those you mention, and was struck with Lord Sandon voting for, and Lord Chandos against committing it: this with reference to recent communications, which do not seem to have produced any change of sentiment or intention.

* * * * *

Lord Camden mentioned to me after dinner yesterday, that as he had understood I had written, or meant to write, to your Lordship respecting his communication to the King on the subject of the Peerage, he might feel it to be due to himself to see you, and explain that he had been encouraged by His Majesty last year to wait upon him *at any time*, and to express his sentiments freely; and that, upon this occasion, His Majesty's language had been to the same effect; and he asked me whether I considered him at liberty to say this to you. I replied that I was perfectly aware that the King had so expressed himself to him last year; and that, when I mentioned to you his Lordship's application for an audience, I stated also the King's friendly feeling, and his high regard for him: that the King was as incapable as his Lordship of entertaining a wish to say or to do anything in an underhand or indirect manner, and therefore could not possibly object to, or disapprove of, his making the proposed communication to your Lordship, as he had authorised me with his (Lord Camden's) knowledge, to mention to you what he had said to him as a Peer and Privy Councillor and a friend, and which I had no doubt I had correctly repeated, His Majesty's repetition of the words having entirely agreed with his Lordship's. He then said he should certainly wait upon you.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 328.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, Jan. 25, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—An extraordinary pressure of business during the last two days must be my excuse for this tardy acknowledgment of your letters of the 21st and 22nd.

His Majesty's concurrence in the propriety of deferring the proposal for enacting new laws to strengthen the Government, more particularly in Ireland, till the necessity becomes evident and indisputable, has afforded me the greatest satisfaction. The King may be assured that the vigilance of his Ministers, as to these matters, will not be relaxed; and a Bill for renewing and improving the Proclamation Act, which expired at the dissolution of Parliament, is ready to be introduced, whenever it shall appear to be required.

The Reform Bill is going on satisfactorily, and with less delay than I had expected. There is no abatement in the hostility of its direct opponents, but the House seems generally to wish to get rid of it, and is unwilling to listen to speeches. I have no intelligence as to individuals, that enables me to form a more certain judgment as to the probable issue of the discussion on the second reading in the House of Lords.

Lord Aberdeen's motion to-morrow is evidently intended as a trial of strength. It is to be, as you will have seen in the papers, either a resolution or an address, *i. e.* a direct censure on the measures of the Administration. As this can only be considered as a party attack, I have thought myself justified in expressing in a letter to Lord Hill, an anxious wish that Government may have his support on this occasion.

O'Connell is again on his good behaviour, and professing every kind of wish to assist the passing of the Reform Bill. But he is very much mistaken if he thinks that I, for one at least, will ever have any dealings with him except at arm's length.

We are now looking at our estimates, and must cut as close as possible, there being unfortunately a considerable deficiency in the revenue, though I have not the least doubt of its completely recovering, if the present causes of its decline could be removed. In the strength and efficiency of the army nothing can be reduced. In the staff some savings may be made, which have been pointed out by the Commissioners of Military Inquiry. There is a great notion that a new system of supplying the clothing might afford a saving without injury to the colonel or the soldier. This of course could have no effect for the present year; but it is worth looking at prospectively; and I have written to Lord Hill to desire he would furnish me with the opinions of such generals as he may think most competent to give one, and send them to me together with his own before July. The question respecting the Blues and the clothing of the Household troops has been decided as he wished.

What has passed between you and Lord Camden is exactly what I should have expected from a man of his honourable character. I shall be very happy to see and talk with him whenever he may wish it.

* * * * *

I am, &c. GREY.

If there are any Peers at Brighton, and you have no objection to interfere in such matters, could you urge them to come to town for to-morrow's division?

No. 329.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Jan. 25, 1832.

My dear Lord,—The King has ordered me to send your Lordship the enclosed letter from Lord Londonderry and a copy of the answer. I have been directed to add a private note, desiring him to be here at half-past six, and to dine here on that day.

* * * * *

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 330.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, Jan. 26, 1832.

My dear Sir,—Buried in papers which I have not had time to look over till this morning, and obliged to be prepared upon them for to-night's debate, I can only acknowledge your letter of yesterday.

* * * * *

I hear this morning that there will not be a division on Lord Aberdeen's motion, but I have no assurance that I can depend upon; and I have been obliged to put many of the friends of the Government to great inconvenience by desiring them to come. The discussion will be very mischievous, though I am quite determined to avoid, as much as possible, every topic of an unpleasant nature; but if attacked I must defend myself.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 331.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Jan. 26, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have had the honour to receive and to submit to the King your Lordship's letter of yesterday, who orders me to add to what he had ordered me to say on a former occasion respecting Political Unions and other objectionable associations, in consequence of the communications made to him and the addresses received, that he had never doubted the vigilance of his Ministers, or your Lordship's determination to resist these encroachments upon the administrative authorities and laws of the country. An instance occurred yesterday of the spirit in which these associations are encouraged. A petition was left at my door for the King, amply provided with signatures, in favour of the five culprits condemned to death at Bristol. The person who left it did not wait, or give his address, nor was there any attached to the petition, otherwise I should have returned it on account of the highly objectionable wording, which is insulting in the greatest degree to the judge and special commission and the administration of the government and law of the country. I received the King's commands to send it to Lord Melbourne, and I have since learnt that those who signed it are of the lowest classes, and a sort of *branch* of the general Political Union. Having occasion to see the High Constable this morning, I gave some of the names to him that he might keep his eye upon them.

His Majesty was very glad to hear that you are determined never to have any dealings with Mr. O'Connell, except at arm's length, and he hopes that Lord Anglesey will adopt the same resolution.

* * * * *

The progress of the Reform Bill in the House of Commons appears to His Majesty satisfactory, and he wishes that the prospects in the House of Lords were equally so. Lord Aberdeen's motion is obviously made, as you observe, with a view to a trial of strength;

and I sincerely hope he may be disappointed, as, independently of the general hostility to the Government, the occasion taken is mischievous and inconsistent with the view he, of all others, ought to take of the interests of the country in its foreign relations.

The King had concluded that the deficiency in the revenue would produce a minute revision of the estimates, but is glad to hear that it is not intended to propose any reduction in the strength and efficiency of the army. I believe that some reductions in the staff have taken place since the sitting of the last Finance Committee. It was expected, at that period, that a new system of supplying the clothing would be proposed, and I prepared a short memorandum on the subject, which I can send you, if you wish it, or I can give it to Lord Hill.

Your Lordship will, I am certain, have learnt with deep regret, before this reaches you, the melancholy event which occurred in the Pavilion yesterday, as all who knew poor Greenwood, and had any intercourse with him, must have loved and respected the amiable, excellent old man, nor do I know any one who will be more sincerely and generally regretted. I had been playing at whist with him, and towards eleven o'clock he complained of headache, and we advised him to quit the hot room and go into the gallery. He walked out alone (as we were afraid of fussing him by accompanying him), and very steadily, but I followed him, and found him sitting in the gallery. He told me he felt unwell, and would go to his room, got up, moved one step, said he feared he should not reach his room, and fell back on my arm senseless, and with a rattle in his throat. Lord Erroll appearing at the door at this moment, I begged him to call Mr. Davies the surgeon, who came immediately and loosened his neckcloth, which seemed to relieve him a little, though he continued senseless, and Mr. Davies said he feared death was approaching. Sir Philip Sidney and Mr. Hudson joined us, and we carried him up to his room, when he recovered for a moment, said he should soon be better, was very sick, could not swallow some sal-volatile and water, breathed hard three times, and expired without a struggle or apparent pain. The whole of this melancholy scene did not last more than ten minutes, and excepting those who had carried him to his room, all had continued ignorant of the occurrence and catastrophe. There was a large party, and I waited until they had left the house, and then broke the sad event to the King, who was greatly shocked and affected, as he was very partial to poor Greenwood. I sent a messenger to Mr. Charles Hammersley last night, and I expect him every moment.

To me this event and the circumstances attending it have been very trying. I was attached to the good old man as to a father, and I believe that this feeling was cordially returned. He had been particularly well and cheerful since he came, and had told my wife and me and others how well he felt; but yesterday he went out without his great coat, and walked slow for some time with Lord Chatham; and he complained afterwards to Lady Taylor of a chill, and thought he had caught cold. Sir M. Tierney thinks the immediate cause of his death was the rupture of a vessel near the heart, and the appearance of the chest this morning appears to him to confirm that opinion.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 332.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

Downing Street, Jan: 27, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I received your letter this morning, and must in the first place offer you my sincere condolence on the loss you have sustained by the death of your excellent friend, Mr. Greenwood. I had very little knowledge of him myself, but everything that I have heard of him proves the general esteem and respect for his character. For himself, at so advanced an age, there could not be a happier way of going out of the world; but it must have been a great shock to all who were present at the time; and nobody, I am sure, would feel it more sincerely, or more deeply, than the King.

The numbers of the division last night in the House of Lords appear good; but the result as to the general disposition of that assembly has not been so satisfactory. Not a single bishop voted, except Chichester and Killaloe, the former holding the proxy of the Bishop of Norwich. I think we might have expected the support of the Bishop of Worcester on such an occasion, either in person or by proxy. The Bishops of Llandaff and Carlisle were in the House at the beginning of the debate, but went away before the division. The motion itself was of the most violent and unprecedented nature;

and, considering the nature of the case, we must consider those who staid away, in which number were included Lords Harrowby, Wharncliffe, and Haddington, as scarcely less hostile to the Government than those who voted. Lord Rosslyn told Lord Durham in the Irish Committee this morning, that they had twenty more proxies, but had not Peers to hold them. All this returns to what I have already said, that the state of the House of Lords is most unfavourable. Lord Hill did not answer my letter, but was present and voted. From Lord Munster I have a letter this morning, excusing himself for not having been in the division on account of the shock which he received during the debate, by hearing of Mr. Greenwood's death, which obliged him to go home.

In the House of Commons you will have seen that we were very hard run, the ex-Ministers and their friends having united with Mr. Hume, O'Connell, &c., and many of the usual friends of Government, in a vote of censure, for it can only be so described, for continuing to pay the Russian-Dutch Loan.* Here is a danger on the other side, and I doubt whether any Government was ever before placed in such difficulties.

I am quite knocked up, having been very unwell, and passed a sleepless night before the debate, the fatigue of which is now telling upon me.

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* Mr. Herries, on 26th January, moved three resolutions on the payment of the interest on the Russian-Dutch Loan. The two first resolutions recited the facts of the case: on these the previous question was moved by Lord Althorp: his amendment was carried, and the House refused to entertain the resolutions by a majority of 239 to 219. The third resolution, which was a censure of the Government, was met by a direct negative, and rejected by 238 to 214.

I shall be much obliged to you for your paper on the clothing of the Army.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 333.

The King to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Jan. 27, 1832.

The King has received Earl Grey's letter, dated at half-past one this morning, and the enclosure relating to the debate upon Lord Aberdeen's motion; * and His Majesty congratulates him upon its satisfactory result, and upon so decided a proof that the feelings of the majority of the House of Lords, however opposed they may be to the Reform Bill, do not influence them to the extent of supporting, from a spirit of party, or of hostility to the existing Government, the objectionable motion which has called for this expression of their sentiments.

His Majesty, indeed, cannot but lament that the Earl of Aberdeen, whose late official duties must have made him peculiarly sensible of the mischievous tendency of such a motion, as it may affect the general interests of the country, should allow himself to be so misled by party feeling as to introduce it, and that the Duke of

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* Lord Aberdeen, on January 26, moved an address to the King condemning the policy of the Government on the Belgian question. After a long debate the motion was rejected, the numbers being:

Not-content, present .	59	Content, present .	39
Proxies . . .	73	Proxies . .	56
	132		95

Majority, 37.

Wellington should have concurred in and supported so unjustifiable and so unstatesmanlike a proceeding.

WILLIAM R.

No. 334.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Jan. 28, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have been favoured with your Lordship's letter of yesterday, and I feel very sensibly the kind terms in which you express your sympathy in the impression made upon all here by the sudden death of poor Greenwood, which has indeed cast a gloom on our circle which it has not recovered. The King has, as you observe, felt the blow very deeply and sincerely; and there happened to be assembled here, at this period, many of the excellent man's intimate friends. I have not yet got the better of the shock, and have found it difficult to get on with my usual work.

The King learnt, with great regret, that you were feeling so unwell and suffering so much from fatigue, though he is not surprised that this should be the case, considering all you have to go through. His Majesty hopes you will get some rest to-day and to-morrow, but these are not times when persons in high responsible situations can expect any respite from labour and anxiety.

His Majesty has written to you fully, as also to Lord Althorp, respecting the debates and division in the House of Commons, which have annoyed him extremely;

and he has received with much concern the account you give of the nature of the division in the House of Lords, which he had considered satisfactory. He is, however, inclined to view the absence of Lords Harrowby, Wharncliffe, and Haddington as indicative of a friendly feeling, though not so that of the Bishops, which has surprised and disappointed him very much. It had indeed been noticed to him yesterday evening by Lord Londonderry, who arrived late for dinner, and presented the addresses after dinner.

I did not see him, having staid at home, but the King told me that he was very quiet at first, but that he grew warm and eager by degrees, and finally worked himself into a state of great excitement on the question of Reform and addition to the Peerage. The King listened without replying. He did not return to the party after seeing His Majesty, and I understand he left Brighton early this day.

The King observed that the Bishop of Worcester is at Worcester, and could not send his proxy, as he has not taken his seat. I beg to send you the memorandum on the clothing and agency of the Army. They were written when I was Surveyor-General of the Ordnance, and the Duke of Wellington and Sir Henry Hardinge, who read them, approved them at that time.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 335.

The King to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Jan. 28, 1832.

* * * * *

Sir Herbert Taylor having submitted to the King the letter addressed to him yesterday by Earl Grey, His Majesty cannot help noticing with great concern, his remark on the division in the House of Commons upon the Russian-Dutch Loan question, and the circumstances connected with it, which have been very fully stated in Viscount Althorp's report to His Majesty.

This event offers a confirmation of the opinion which the King has long entertained, and, he believes, occasionally expressed to Earl Grey and to Viscount Althorp, that no reliance can be placed upon the House of Commons as it is now constituted, and with the spirit which has been shown to animate it on any questions, however vitally they may affect the Government, which the great body of it may profess to support, if the object shall seem to be at variance with any prevailing popular feeling, or if their support of it shall appear likely to excite popular clamour, and to render the advocates for it obnoxious to the people, however unexceptionable it may otherwise be.

Upon this occasion the question is taken up as one of pounds, shillings, and pence, in opposition to the principle of honour and equity, on which the Government had proceeded; and *that* opposition is very naturally encouraged by Messrs. Hume and O'Connell, whose example is followed by many others who had usually supported the Government. If to this deference to popular clamour and feeling be added the spirit of encroachment, and the disposition to usurp the functions of the Executive Government which have distinguished the House of Commons for some time past, and have been too successfully brought into operation;—if a reference be made to their conduct on the Civil Lists questions, and others affecting the dignity and the prerogative of the Crown, His Majesty thinks that he will be borne out in his apprehension, that the general interests of the country, those of the Monarchy and the stability of any Government which may be formed, are exposed to greater danger and prejudice from the growing influence and power of the House of Commons, and from its spirit of encroachment, than from any exertion of the House of Lords to maintain and assert its independence in the discussion of a great constitutional question.

William R.

No. 336.

Earl Grey to the King.

Downing Street, Jan. 29, 1832.

Earl Grey presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and has the honour of acknowledging the receipt of your Majesty's most gracious letters of the 27th and 28th.

The sentiments expressed by your Majesty on the character of the motion made by the Earl of Aberdeen on Thursday last, and of the support given to it, are such as Earl Grey had anticipated. The effect of this proceeding, notwithstanding the result of the debate and the division, Earl Grey fears will prove extremely prejudicial, not only to your Majesty's Government, but to all the interests concerned in the late discussions of the Conference. With respect to the ground afforded by this measure for forming a judgment of the present disposition and the future conduct of the House of Lords, your Majesty is already in possession of Earl Grey's opinion, which has been confirmed by every thing that he has since heard or observed.

Earl Grey has never concealed from your Majesty the difficulties which the present state of the House of Commons opposes to the conduct of public affairs. He believes that they will be less after the Reform has taken place, should that question be happily settled, than they now are. This, however, must be a matter of conjecture and opinion. On the late question, no doubt, the consideration of pounds, shillings, and pence weighed with some, much more than any view of national policy and honour. But the chief impression was made by the words of the Act of Parliament, which there was a disposition to construe *strictly*. The latter was the chief ground taken by Sir Robert Peel and the members of the late Government, who however were not unwilling to avail themselves of the co-operation which the former ground afforded them. From this statement your Majesty will perceive that, as far as relates to this proceeding, there is no reason for believing that the division was rendered more unfavourable to your Majesty's Government by the change which the late dissolution effected in the House of Commons. Most, if not all the members usually supporting the present Administration who failed them on this occasion, had seats before; and in proportion as the adherents of the late Ministers were more numerous, the division would have been worse.

It is with great pain that Earl Grey observes the increased apprehensions of your Majesty from the effect of the Reform Bill. He will not revert to the circumstances under which he proposed the introduction of the measure. He feels deeply all the difficulties with which it is now surrounded; and if he could have foreseen, or contemplated, the persevering and irreconcilable opposition which is given to it in the House of Lords, and which he begs your Majesty will excuse his saying that he believes, however conscientious on the part of some, to be chiefly directed to the overthrow of your Majesty's present Ministers, he would have humbly declined the trust with which your Majesty was pleased to honour him. In the situation to which things are now brought, there appears to Earl Grey to be no safe course but that of using every exertion to carry the measure safely through Parliament; and he cannot help humbly stating to your Majesty his sincere conviction, that if the efforts of those who are urging the House of Lords again to defeat it should prove successful, the total destruction of the power of that House (to the importance of which Earl Grey is not less alive than your Majesty) to maintain itself as an institution placed between the Crown and the people, for their mutual defence and security, would be inevitable.

Earl Grey begs leave to offer to your Majesty his humble thanks for your Majesty's gracious acquiescence in his proposal to appoint Mr. Kennedy to the place now held by Mr. Tennyson in the Ordnance.

* * * * *

But there is another office of much greater importance, in which Earl Grey has now to inform your Majesty of a vacancy. Amongst those who left the House of Commons before the division on Mr. Herries's motion was Sir H. Parnell. The strongest representations were made to him upon the nature of the question; the consequence of which, if it had been carried, must have been that your Majesty's servants could not have continued in office under a recorded censure of the House of Commons. Sir H. Parnell, notwithstanding, refused to vote; and upon Earl Grey's bringing this matter under the consideration of the Cabinet this morning, it has been unanimously agreed that a communication should be made, without loss of time, to Sir H. Parnell, that, after such an occurrence, he cannot continue to hold his present office. Of this determination Earl Grey trusts that your Majesty will be pleased to approve. The appointment of his successor is a matter of the greatest and most pressing importance, the estimates of the present year not being yet prepared to be laid before Parliament. Capacity for business, character with the public, a credit for being well disposed towards a judicious and practical economy, and talents for debate, are all required to fill the office, and more especially at this moment, when it will be necessary to defend the measures connected with the establishment of the Army against the attack which will be directed against it, more especially by Sir H. Parnell, strengthened, as he will be, by the information he has gained since he has been Secretary-at-War. Upon this appointment Earl Grey must feel more than usually anxious that it should not be made without your Majesty's full and entire approbation. After what your Majesty has said upon the danger of filling official situations with persons of high popular opinions, Earl Grey is almost afraid of submitting to your Majesty the name of the person whom he believes to be qualified, above all others at the present moment, to fill this office with advantage to your Majesty's service; but his public duty will not allow him to withhold his opinion, which is confirmed by that of all the rest of your Majesty's servants, and particularly of Lord Palmerston, that Sir J. C. Hobhouse would be the best selection that could be made at present. He has, it is true, been formerly engaged in active scenes of popular contention; but Earl Grey has the strongest assurances that his present views are moderate and just, that he disapproves of many of the measures of the candidates for popular favour, which he has proved by refusing to belong to the Westminster Union, and that with liberal principles he unites a sincere desire to support the necessary authority of the Government, and the just prerogatives of your Majesty's Crown. Earl Grey has no assurance that he would accept the office if it were offered to him, not having felt himself at liberty even to sound him upon it without being assured of your Majesty's approbation.

All which, &c. GREY.

No. 337.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

Downing Street, Jan. 29, 1832.

My dear Sir,—This accompanies my letter to the King.

I will not conceal from you that I feel great uneasiness from the evident impression that has been made on the King's mind, with respect to the present effect and future consequences of the Reform Bill. There is no safe retreat now. We must either go forward with the spirit of the times, so far as may be necessary to give the Government strength, to check it if it should be excited to aim at more dangerous objects. This necessary resistance, I am sure, can only be made, by granting to public opinion what is reasonably expected by it; by proceeding sincerely in this course; and by avoiding every thing that might create suspicion either of the good faith or resolution of the Government.

The other alternative, and the only one, is to stop short, and to resist all further concession. It is to this that the opposing party would urge the House of Lords, and if they succeed I shall tremble for the consequences.

But of this result I am more apprehensive than I was. In the division the other night there was not one vote given in favour of the Government, except that of Lord O'Neil, which we had not in the former division on the second reading of the Reform Bill. There remains therefore a reserve, which, even with large allowances for changes, would leave a force, if it can be brought into action, sufficient to give the adversaries of Reform a second triumph. From some circumstances, I have reason to believe that they were unwilling, and some of their partisans have declared so, to produce an effect which might at once have furnished an excuse for creating Peers. Be this as it may, the result is that there is great danger of failure on the second reading of the Reform Bill;—if this should be carried, too much probability that the Bill may be so mutilated in the Committee as to oblige us to abandon it;—and if these two difficulties are surmounted, no security that there will not be, on all other subjects, such a combination against the Government as may make it very difficult to go on. It might be thought bad policy to show so much uneasiness as to our situation. But I think it necessary that it should be explained to the King. It has been my maxim, ever since I was in his service, to conceal nothing from him that it was material to him to know; and I think it more than ever necessary at the present moment, that he may be prepared in time for whatever may happen.

I fully appreciate all the generous and amiable feelings which have induced His Majesty to banish all party distinctions from his society, and to receive with the graciousness which belongs to him, and with hospitality and kindness, those who are in the most bitter opposition to his Government. But a very unfair advantage has been taken of this condescension. His Majesty's feelings have been most industriously misrepresented; the falsest accounts of the impression made upon him by those who have been admitted to his presence have been circulated; feeling that they are equally well received has encouraged those who vote in opposition; and the result has been, most indisputably, very injurious to the strength of the Government. His Majesty will, I am sure, do me the justice to acknowledge that I have never presumed to interfere with the rule which he has adopted for his private society. I admire the benevolence which in this, and every other instance, marks his conduct; but I should have much to answer for, when the stability of his Government is at stake, if I were to disguise any of the circumstances by which it is affected.

I have written this more hastily than became the very grave nature of the subject. But difficulties are pressing so fast and so heavily upon us, that I thought this explanation could no longer be delayed. I am ready, with His Majesty's full confidence and support, to fight the battle through; or if it should be thought more likely to relieve him from the embarrassments which now exist, to lay at His Majesty's feet the appointment with which he has honoured me; in performing the duties of which I may have erred, but not from any want of an affectionate attachment to His Majesty's person, or of a sincere zeal for his service.

* * * * *

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 338.

The King to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Jan. 30, 1832.

The King acknowledges the receipt of Earl Grey's letter of yesterday, from which he is sorry to learn the importance which he attaches to the effect of the motion made on Thursday by the Earl of Aberdeen, and of the support given to it as it regards His Majesty's Government, as he had flattered himself that the mischief would be confined to the interests concerned in the late discussions of the Conference, a view of this subject which had struck him as sufficiently serious.

His Majesty has never attempted to conceal from Earl Grey the increased uneasiness and apprehension with which he has contemplated the effects of the Reform Bill. The feeling with which the King approached this question is amply and candidly stated in his letter to Earl Grey of the 4th February last, which confirmed the sanction he had given verbally to the proposed Bill; and the expression of it has been repeated in various communications, but more particularly in his letter of the 24th April last, to which the King has more than once called Lord Grey's attention. It would be idle, and it would be trifling with Earl Grey's good sense to say, that this feeling, and the apprehensions which were always entertained and expressed by His Majesty of the serious difficulties which might arise, and the embarrassments under which the country and the Government might be placed, by a collision between the two Houses of Parliament upon a great popular question, had been weakened by what has occurred in the progress of the Bill, as that collision which His Majesty apprehended, and those embarrassments which he anticipated from it, have arisen, and have produced the difficulties which have led of late to so many communications of anxious import, and above all have created the necessity of admitting for consideration and decision a measure to which the King believes Earl Grey to have felt as much repugnance as His Majesty does.

Earl Grey notices the persevering and irreconcilable opposition which is given to the Bill in the House of Lords, as being such as he could not have foreseen or contemplated; but he will do the King the justice to say, that he had frequently expressed his apprehension of it; and that, at various periods, more particularly at the period of the dissolution of Parliament, and in October after the rejection of the Bill in the House of Lord, His Majesty adverted to the possibility of renewed disappointment, and urged the importance of resorting to all practicable and justifiable means of reconciling the opponents to the measure. While, however, the King has felt disposed to give credit to a portion (and he hopes a large portion) of the opponents in the House of Lords for conscientious motives in the course they have pursued, he is by no means inclined to deny that a great number of those who are taking the most violent part may be guided by a desire to overthrow His Majesty's present Ministers, and to bring themselves into office. This, however, does not mend the matter; while their efforts, although not springing from the same source, are directed to the same result.

While His Majesty makes these remarks, he does not cease to bear in mind the circumstances under which Earl Grey proposed the introduction of the measure, and that His Majesty sanctioned the nature and the extent of the principle on which it was proposed to be introduced. His Majesty has invariably assured Earl Grey of his determination to support him in his endeavour to carry into effect the arduous task which he has undertaken; and he believes no part of his conduct to be open to the imputation or the suspicion that he has not firmly and honourably redeemed a pledge, without receiving which Earl Grey could not have committed himself as he has done. His Majesty is also of Earl Grey's opinion, that there appears to be no safe course but that of using every exertion to carry the measure safely through Parliament; and having admitted the existence of the difficulty, he is not disposed to shrink from it, but quite prepared to aid Earl Grey in meeting it.

But this does not prevent His Majesty from entertaining serious apprehensions of those which may remain to be encountered after the Reform Bill shall have passed; and although they have been increased or rather confirmed by the recent division in the House of Commons, he may with confidence refer to successive communications of his sentiments for a proof that he has been consistent in the opinion conveyed to Earl Grey and to Viscount Althorp in his letters of the 28th inst.

His Majesty admits that Earl Grey has never concealed the difficulties which the present state of the House of Commons presents to the conduct of public affairs, but he has never felt disposed to admit his opinion that these difficulties would be removed or even diminished by the results of the Reform Bill. His Majesty has, on the contrary, apprehended from them an accumulation of embarrassment to the Government in the administration of its executive functions, from a more popular representation, and he does not deny that he looks forward with dread to the probability of the Government being abandoned by many of those who may be considered its supporters, upon every occasion when the object to be carried may not be in unison with the popular feeling upon it.

The King is persuaded, indeed, that there is not an individual in the country to whose high principled and honourable mind he could appeal with greater confidence than to Earl Grey, for the corresponding opinion that the Government of this country may, under circumstances which justly entitle it to the support of those who know how to distinguish between objects of general interest, importance, and security, and minutiæ of subordinate character, and in the hour of trial, rely with greater confidence upon gentlemen whose views are liberal and enlarged, and who enter Parliament with independent feelings, than upon those who are seeking popular favour, and who have pledged themselves to measures which may be inconsistent with the principle and indispensable practice of any well-constituted Government. His Majesty conceives that abundant proof of this opinion may be found in the result of Mr. Herries's late motion; and it must not be forgotten that those who abandoned the Government on this occasion must have been sensible that, by such course, they risked, with the overthrow of the Government, the loss of the Reform Bill, although they had professed on former occasions to overlook many points to which they objected while that question should be at issue.

The King is unwilling to take up more of Earl Grey's time by the discussion of a subject which has been so frequently that of his communications, and he will proceed to reply to other parts of his letter.

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To Earl Grey's proposal that Sir John Cam Hobhouse should succeed Sir Henry Parnell in the important office of Secretary-at-War the King cannot possibly object. His recent course in manfully expressing his disapprobation of and resisting the objectionable and revolutionary measures of some candidates for popular favour had not escaped His Majesty's notice; and while he gives him credit for the line he has thus drawn, His Majesty is by no means disposed to consider him less respectable or trustworthy, because he has been consistent in the political opinions he has maintained. He has further the advantage of being of an old and respectable family, well connected, his pursuits have been literary and liberal, and His Majesty is assured that his disposition and manner qualify him for the intercourse which official situations impose, while his abilities are unquestionable. His Majesty, therefore, hopes that Sir J. C. Hobhouse will not decline this situation. WILLIAM R.

No. 339.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Jan. 30, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have the honour to forward a letter from the King, which will, I hope, prove *generally* satisfactory to you, although it states his continued apprehensions of the embarrassment which the Government may experience from the conduct of a House of Commons whose ruling principle is deference to popular feeling.

I hope you will be able to read His Majesty's letter, but I had intended it for the draft, and have not had time to copy it; nor if I had, should I be equal to the exertion at present, having one of my bad headaches, which have lately become intermittent, with the interval of a day only, and very trying.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 340.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

Downing Street, Jan. 31, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I was sorry to learn by your letter of yesterday, that you were suffering so severely from the headache, and that it had become intermittent. You should, if possible, arrange your business, the pressing nature of which I well know, so as always to secure regular daily air and exercise.

Nothing could be more gratifying to me than the assurance, more particularly from the gracious and confiding manner in which it is given, of His Majesty's continued and determined support. I should, indeed, have made a bad return for all the kindness I have received from him, if I could have doubted His Majesty's resolution in this respect. But encouraging as this assurance is, I cannot help feeling the uneasiness that I before expressed, at His Majesty's increasing apprehension of the effects of the Reform Bill, as it must be painful to think that the support which His Majesty gives to his Government, is accompanied by some doubt as to the propriety of the course they have taken. This feeling of His Majesty has either been discovered or guessed at by those who approach him, and who have not scrupled to propagate the most unfounded statements respecting it. On persons willing to believe whatever is most favourable to their own views, these statements have not been without their effect; and the conduct of the House of Lords has been, I am very confident, very different from what it would have been if they had not been impressed with a notion of the insecurity of the present Ministers. With respect to the state of the House of Commons, I enclose, in support of the opinion which I have expressed on this subject, a list of the division, and a short analysis of it, as respects those who, having voted for Reform, left the Government in the lurch on this occasion. You will see in this analysis how small an addition was made to the strength of the Opposition by members of popular principles. The truth is, that so great a command of Parliamentary influence as is possessed by those who are now in opposition, gives them a power which a small accession of violent or crotchety people may increase on any occasion, like that of Mr. Herries's motion, to a degree that may threaten the defeat of any Government. It must always be remembered, that the motion was not brought forward by the Radicals, but by those who profess the opposite opinions, and who have shown that they are ready to avail themselves of any advantage to embarrass the Government to which they are opposed.

I never was happier than at the King's ready acceptance of my recommendation of Sir J. Hobhouse. I feel very little doubt of his accepting, and it is an appointment which I am sure will give general satisfaction.

The accounts of the manner in which the Manchester meeting was dispersed on Sunday are most satisfactory, and I think will please the King. I hope they have got proof enough to convict the persons who are apprehended of a misdemeanour; and I think the magistrates acted very judiciously in not committing for a higher offence, unless the proof was so clear as to leave no doubt of a conviction. But the evidence will be sent to us, for the opinion of the Law Officers.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 341.

Earl Grey to the King.

Downing Street, Jan. 31, 1832.

Earl Grey presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and begs to tender to your Majesty his sincere thanks for your Majesty's gracious letter of yesterday.

Earl Grey has always acknowledged, and must always acknowledge, with heartfelt gratitude, the explicitness of your Majesty's conduct towards him on all occasions, and the support which he has received from your Majesty in the trying situation in which he has been placed. These feelings are confirmed and augmented by your Majesty's gracious and encouraging assurance of your Majesty's resolution to continue to Earl Grey the same powerful assistance in meeting the present difficulties.

* * * * *

Earl Grey cannot sufficiently express his pleasure at the full and gracious approbation given by your Majesty to the appointment of Sir J. C. Hobhouse to succeed Sir H. Parnell. Viscount Althorp has communicated with him this morning on this subject, and the result is an expression on his part, of the greatest satisfaction at having received the offer, of a sincere desire to accept it, but a reservation of the power of considering it more carefully before his final determination is taken. The only difficulty appears to be, the chance of an opposition to him in Westminster from Mr. Place and the violent party, who are very angry with him for having refused to belong to the Union.

* * * * *

All which, &c. GREY.

No. 342.

The King to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Feb. 1, 1832.

The King rejoices to learn from Earl Grey's letter of yesterday, that His Majesty's communication of the preceding day had proved so satisfactory to him, as His Majesty is quite sensible of the serious difficulties which Earl Grey has to encounter, and has always felt anxious, not only to aid and support him, but also to encourage him, whenever they have become most trying; and although it behoves him not to underrate them, or to blink them, Earl Grey may feel assured that a full sense of the difficulty will not induce him to shrink from it.

His Majesty trusts that the anticipation of an opposition in Westminster from Mr. Place will not induce Sir John Cam Hobhouse to decline office at this period; and he hopes that the dispersion of the meeting called by the Political Union at Manchester, and the exposure of some of the designs and projects of these revolutionary Unionists, may tend greatly to weaken the operations of their coadjutors and confederates in London, whether directed against respectability of representation, or against the authority of the Government and the public peace and security.

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WILLIAM R.

No. 343.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Feb. 1, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I am much obliged to you for your letter of yesterday.

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I rejoice sincerely that the impression made by the King's letter of Monday last has not disappointed my expectation, that it would prove satisfactory to your Lordship's feelings, as His Majesty was anxious that it should prove so, and that you should feel assured that he adheres faithfully to his pledge, and will not shrink from the course to which it has committed you, although he may not be able to abandon opinions and feelings early imbibed, and which the progress of events has not tended to weaken. It is equally difficult, not to say impossible, for him at all times to conceal these feelings; and your Lordship must be aware that His Majesty's society and intercourse are indiscriminate, and that in his own family (I mean among his children) there is much difference of opinion. Others have approached him lately who would not scruple to say that His Majesty appeared low, and to view with alarm the present state of things, and that some expression dropped (and made the most of) betrayed his apprehension. All this may and would naturally have its effect; but I do not see how it can be avoided; and I am quite certain that His Majesty has not, upon any occasion, uttered a word that could be construed into want of confidence in his Ministers, or justify a doubt of their security.

I will return the list of the division and analysis of it by this evening's post, with some remarks His Majesty has ordered me to make on it, and your Lordship's letter, but I cannot enter into that part of it now, as I do not wish to detain the messenger longer.

The business at Manchester has given the *greatest* satisfaction to the King, and he agrees with you that the magistrates acted very judiciously in not committing for a higher offence than a misdemeanour, unless certain of obtaining proof to convict.

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I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 344.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

Downing Street, Feb. 1, 1832.

My dear Sir,—I have the pleasure of announcing to you for the information of His Majesty, the acceptance of the office of Secretary-at-War by Sir J. C. Hobhouse. This appointment appears to give a great and general satisfaction.

We had another proof last night of the effect of such an Opposition as the present; though Sir R. Peel and Mr. Herries, not very creditably to themselves I think, went away, the whole body of their friends, with the exception of Mr. Courtenay and Mr. Frankland Lewis and Mr. Charles Wynne, voted in support of a motion,* which, if they had been in the Government, they must have resisted. Here again the junction of many members acting from local interests, or particular opinions, gave a strength to the division which it ought not to have had; the numbers however, making allowance for these circumstances, were as good as could have been expected.

I enclose a list of voters similar to that of yesterday.

I am, &c. GREY.

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* This was a motion by Colonel Davies for a Committee to enquire into the distressed state of the glove trade.

The division was—	For the motion	168
	Against it	223
	Majority	55

No. 345.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Feb. 2, 1832.

The King was very glad to learn, from the letter with which your Lordship favoured me yesterday, that Sir J. C. Hobhouse had accepted the office of Secretary-at-War, and that this appointment appears to give general satisfaction. His Majesty was aware, and had indeed mentioned to me, that you would have been glad to place Sir Henry Hardinge in it, if circumstances had admitted it. His services in that situation were indeed invaluable, as I can testify from daily intercourse and cordial co-operation while I was Adjutant-General, but I do not know whether, as matters stand, Sir J. Hobhouse will not better answer the general purposes of the Government.

I return the lists which accompanied your Lordship's two letters, and which I have submitted to His Majesty.

* * * * *

These lists show, as your Lordship observes, that the addition made to the strength of the Opposition by members of popular principles upon these occasions, has been very small, and that various motives influenced those who usually support the Government in opposing it upon this; but, considering that the fate of the Reform Bill, of which they are warm supporters, is identified with the existence of the Government, it appears extraordinary that they should have run the risk; and does not, in His Majesty's opinion, entitle them to much confidence hereafter. That the Radicals are not to be depended upon by any established Government, the King believes that you are quite as much disposed as he is to think; and, as to those who profess opposite opinions, and have become, from circumstances, the party opposed to Government, although they may not always take the course which is most creditable and most consistent with the principles they professed and contended for when in authority, it is in the natural and usual *routine* that, once constituting a party in opposition, they should take advantage of every opportunity to embarrass the Government, and if possible to drive them from the offices which many of them may be ambitious again to fill.

All this appears to His Majesty to be borne out by experience, and it is very possible that the House of Commons, as now constituted, presents greater elements of discord, and offers less ground of confidence to a Government upon general questions, than it will after the Reform Bill has passed, and the feelings and views begin to become more settled; nor is it unlikely that the majority coming into Parliament under the influence of a measure which has been introduced by the existing Government may feel to be connected with it by the principle of that measure; but this does not, in His Majesty's apprehension, relieve the Government from the risk of being abandoned by members so circumstanced, whenever popular feeling, or popular clamour and prejudice, however unreasonable, shall be opposed to the views and measures of the Government; and His Majesty cannot lose sight of the growing influence of the press, nor of the extraordinary power which it unfortunately possesses, of exciting popular feeling, and of producing prejudice and misconstruction.

Your Lordship will say that these are all signs of the times, and that the evil which His Majesty apprehends would at any rate have arisen. This is granted, but unfortunately does not mend the case.

The King has read this letter, and says that it expresses correctly what he meant I should say; and that, after all, it only confirms an opinion often expressed by His Majesty, that the House of Commons has gradually acquired a degree of power and influence which must cramp the exercise of the executive functions of the Government, and often prove seriously embarrassing to it, and prejudicial to the interests of the country.

The King will be anxious to learn the result of Lord Wynford's motion.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 346.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

Downing Street, Feb. 3, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—Accept my best thanks for your letters of the 1st and of yesterday.

I have written an account of the debate to the King, which I regret not having sent off last night, as you say His Majesty was anxious to receive it. There never was a more complete discomfiture than that of the Opposition. The motion * itself, according to all form and precedent, was absolutely untenable; and even Lord Lyndhurst would not have voted for it. They threaten, however, to come again to the attack, on a motion of direct censure; but I think, after a little time for cool reflection on the irresistible argument of the Chancellor, they will abandon this intention if they really entertained it.

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* The motion was one made in the House of Lords by Lord Wynford, for ordering the attendance of the Judges to give their opinion to the House as to the legality of what had been done by the Government with respect to the payment of the interest on the Russian-Dutch Loan. After

It is undoubtedly true, that a party in opposition has too frequently availed itself of an opportunity of embarrassing the Government, though not in accordance with their previously declared principles and opinions. But I think I never knew this carried to such an extent as by the present Opposition. Without citing more instances, I would refer you only to the question of the Timber Duties, and to that of the other night, where the attack against the Ministers was for having adhered to the treaty which they themselves had negotiated when in office. I think I can with confidence refer you to the conduct of the party now in power, when opposed to the late Government, as never having exhibited any similar instance of faction. If you will take the trouble of looking over the list of debates and divisions, you will find that no question was brought forward or opposed, except on principles to which they were previously pledged. On many you will find that Ministers received their unequivocal and unhesitating support. If I had been factiously inclined, I leave it to any body to say whether, on the Catholic question, it was not in my power, in perfect

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the Chancellor's speech, Lord Eldon spoke strongly against the Government, but did not approve the form of the motion; and, after a short reply from Lord Wynford, it was withdrawn.

consistency with my general support of the Bill, to have struck a blow which would have been fatal to them. Indeed, it was not without difficulty that I abstained from voting against parts of that measure which were directly against my opinion, and which have since so greatly contributed to destroy its salutary effects. But it was not only passively that I served them. My support was given cordially not only to the measure but to the men who introduced it. Instead of exposing their inconsistency, which it would have been very easy for me to have done at the same time that I supported the Bill, I put myself gratuitously forward to defend them against the charge which was so vehemently urged against them on this account. Had I taken another line, and opposed the disqualifying clause for instance, with the whole host of Tories at my back, which would have been exactly what they have done in these instances, the event could not have been doubtful. I ought not, however, to speak in the singular number, for the whole body of the then Opposition, though not generally so well disposed as I was towards the Duke of Wellington, did the same. With respect to our present opponents, though I have selected the two instances of the Timber Duties and the Russian Loan, I must add that they are in my opinion by no means the worst, though they may mark the greatest inconsistency. Lord Aberdeen's motion exceeds in factious spirit, and in a deliberate intention to embarrass the Ministers, at the risk of inflicting the greatest injury on the public interest, anything that I ever witnessed during the whole of my parliamentary career.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 347.

Earl Grey to the King.

Downing Street, Feb. 3, 1832.

Earl Grey presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and has the honour of acknowledging the receipt of your Majesty's most gracious letter of the 1st, and of expressing the high gratification which it afforded him.

As the debate in the House of Lords went off without a division, and as Lord Erroll, who was to return to Brighton this morning, undertook to convey this to your Majesty, Earl Grey did not think it necessary to dispatch a special messenger last night. He now encloses for your Majesty's information a list of the Peers present, and of the speakers in the debate, with a copy of the motion.

From all the information he had previously received, Earl Grey had every reason to believe that a great effort would be made by the Opposition on this occasion. He was told by Lord Rosslyn positively that they intended to divide, and their having entered twenty-one proxies yesterday morning confirmed this information. This intention seems to have been abandoned from Lord Eldon's declaration that he could not vote for a reference to the Judges, in the manner in which the motion was put, though he was prepared to support the strongest censure that could be pronounced on the conduct of your Majesty's Ministers. The chief cause, however, of the motion being withdrawn was probably the impression made by the powerful speech of the Chancellor, which, in point of close argument and general ability, Earl Grey thinks was equal to anything he ever heard.

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The debate concluded in the most satisfactory manner for your Majesty's Ministers.

All which, &c. GREY.

No. 348.

The King to Earl Grey.

Brighton, Feb. 4, 1832.

The King has received Earl Grey's letter of yesterday, respecting the very satisfactory course and result of the debate in the House of Lords on Thursday upon Lord Wynford's motion, in which the Lord Chancellor appears to have distinguished himself in an extraordinary degree.

This occurrence seems to the King to offer another instance (if indeed any doubt could exist on this point) of the disappointment which must ever attend the introduction of motions and propositions by one or more individuals upon which no previous understanding or concert has taken place among those who are generally opposed to the Government; and His Majesty cannot but consider that Earl Grey would be justified in discovering, in the event of Thursday evening, symptoms of want of union and consistency of action among the different parties composing the Opposition, which might possibly be turned to good purpose before the Reform Bill is introduced into the House of Lords.

WILLIAM R.

No. 349.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Feb. 4, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have the honour to transmit the King's answer to your Lordship's letter of yesterday, and to acquaint you that I have submitted to His Majesty the letter for me which accompanied it, and which he read with the attention and the interest which its contents so well merit.

His Majesty learnt with very great satisfaction the result of Lord Wynford's motion, and that the Lord Chancellor availed himself so successfully of this opportunity to state that which may possibly prevent further recurrence to the subject of the Russian-Dutch Loan. His Majesty's anxiety had arisen from an impression, gathered from the reports of the debates on the same subject in the House of Commons, that some objection might be made to the legality of the proceeding, or rather to the authority for it, though it was strictly defensible on the score of honour and equity.

The contrast which your Lordship has drawn between the character of the opposition which your Administration has experienced from the party now arrayed against you, and that which as a Government they experienced from the party now in power when out of office, has struck His Majesty extremely; and he admits that you have shown that the latter had not laid itself open to the same extent to the imputation of being actuated by a factious spirit. Indeed His Majesty cannot forget, that a large portion of the party now in opposition consists of *Ultra Tories*, who had become one of the most virulent factions that differences in political or constitutional questions had ever produced in this country; and, from some of their late proceedings, he fears that the rest of the party may have caught the infection. His Majesty of course adverts to their opposition from a spirit of opposition, or as a party, to measures resting on principles to which they were previously pledged, not to the Reform Bill, respecting which, as well as the question of Parliamentary Reform generally, their opinions had been consistent and unequivocally declared, and had therefore not fairly merited to be described as factious. His Majesty's sentiments upon the objectionable character of Lord Aberdeen's late motion have been unequivocally stated, and he expressed his surprise that the Duke of Wellington could bring himself to support it.

The King is perfectly sensible of the honourable character of your opposition on all occasions, and especially in all great public questions, nor unmindful of the support which you gave to the Duke of Wellington on the Catholic question; and he is aware also that his Grace and his colleagues had no reason to complain of any hostile feeling on your part towards them, or of any manifestation of it. Nor is it to your Lordship, or indeed to any particular individuals, that His Majesty meant to apply the remarks he ordered me to make in my letter of the 2nd. His Majesty is well aware that your Lordship has not sought office, nor pressed forward your services, but that they were called for, and given at a period of extreme difficulty and embarrassment; nor does His Majesty consider your situation enviable any more than his own in these arduous times. But His Majesty apprehends that his remarks may apply to many who are and have been in Government and in opposition, in and out of office, and that they apply more or less to all periods of our history. They appear to him strongly exemplified in some individuals who are taking a prominent and *noisy* part in the discussions in both Houses.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 350.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

Downing Street, Feb. 7, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I return Sir M. Tierney's letter. It contains, I fear, too true an account of the general state of Ireland, and certainly a very correct one of the difficulties of the Government attacked on both sides by two violent and irreconcilable parties. We must, I think, have recourse to some strong measure to check the present combined resistance, so rapidly extending itself, to the payment of tithes in Ireland. This can only be done by a new law, for nothing has been neglected for which the present state of the law gives a power, and such a measure is now under consideration.

The handbill you sent is certainly as bad in spirit and intention as possible; but I am not greatly alarmed by these paper shots, and at all events a prosecution of the printer would do nothing to check them. If we could get at the authors and contrivers of these things it would be another matter, and some day I hope some discovery of this sort will enable us to act.

I did not think it necessary to answer the King's last letter, as I was to see His Majesty yesterday. I hope he has not suffered from the last Council and the late hour at which he returned to Brighton.

I understood from the Chancellor that he described to you yesterday our situation in the House of Lords. I wish I could take a more satisfactory view of it.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 351.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Feb. 8, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have been favoured with your Lordship's letter of yesterday, and have submitted it to the King, who had mentioned to me that a new law had been framed, and was under consideration, to check the present combined resistance to the payment of tithes in Ireland. He is quite aware of the difficulty of checking the circulation of such handbills as I sent you.

I reported to the King what the Lord Chancellor had said to me on the situation of the Government in the House of Lords, and the difficulties and embarrassments attending it, and I need not add that His Majesty received the information with great concern.

Yesterday afternoon I received a message from Lord Wharncliffe expressing a desire to see me, and with the King's sanction, and the understanding that I should endeavour to bring matters to some point, and communicate the result to you, I went to him this morning. We had a very long interview, towards the close of which I proposed to him that I should commit to paper in his presence the general substance of his communication, and leave a copy with him, and that, after submitting it to the King, I should transmit the minute to your Lordship.

I now beg to enclose it, and I trust you will find it satisfactory; for you will observe that he attaches no condition as to implied modifications, &c., to the support to be given to the second reading, though of course he and his friends may anticipate the facility of carrying some in Committee.

He did not touch on this point, and I thought it most advisable to avoid all reference to it, as its introduction might have raised a question.

This communication has given the King great satisfaction, as offering a better prospect than any that has yet opened; and His Majesty would eagerly hail any arrangement, consistent with the security of the Government, that would relieve him from the dreaded and most obnoxious proposal to add to the House of Lords.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

We got home at a quarter before two, His Majesty not at all the worse.

(Enclosure.)

Minute of Conversation with Lord Wharncliffe.

Brighton, Feb. 8, 1832.

Lord Wharncliffe's sentiments have undergone no change: they are still moderate and conciliatory. In the meantime the sentiments of some of those who probably would be induced to concur and co-operate with Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe have become better ascertained; and, as the season advances, greater facilities will offer, of which they trust they shall be able to avail themselves with good effect, so as to insure the means of carrying the second reading of the Reform Bill.

Lord Wharncliffe does not disguise that the object he has in view is twofold; the one to produce a result which he considers to be, under present circumstances, the only safe way out of the difficulties in which the country is involved; the other to prevent the introduction of the fatal proposal of creating Peers, or even of adding to the number of the House of Lords for the express purpose of forcing this measure through that House. And with respect to the latter, he declares that he himself (and he is quite confident that his friends will concur with him) will, in the event of the Government bringing forward and carrying into effect such creation of Peers, or such addition to the House of Lords, convert the support which they are now disposed to give to the second reading, into the most uncompromising and bitter hostility to the Government upon the whole measure, and in every stage of it.

Lord Wharncliffe added that he was desirous of not now taking the decided step of making a declaration in his place in the House of Lords on this subject, as he fears that his doing so at this moment might rather increase the difficulties in his way than tend to remove them. But this is without reference to any unwillingness to avow the line which he is *individually* prepared to take.

No. 352.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, Feb. 10, 1832.

My dear Sir,—Constant occupation during the whole of the day prevented me from answering yesterday your letter of the 8th, enclosing a memorandum of what had passed between you and Lord Wharncliffe.

I wish I could see the latter in the satisfactory view which you appear to take of it. It seems to me to amount to no more than that Lord Wharncliffe himself, and those with whom he is immediately connected, will vote for the second reading, without any statement of the numbers on which they can rely to support them, and without any assurance, beyond that of a confident hope, of their being able to carry even that question.

But with respect to the Committee everything is left in a state of the greatest uncertainty; and you cannot but be aware that *there* such alterations may be made as would be no less fatal to the Bill, than its rejection on the second reading. The danger of such a result would be of the most formidable nature. The public excitement would be as great as if the Bill had been rejected at once; and the Ministers would be exposed, in an equal degree with its direct opponents, to a storm of popular indignation, excited by a belief that they had not sincerely exerted their power to insure the success of the measure.

The situation is full of embarrassment and difficulty. A previous understanding that certain points would be secured on the one hand, and conceded on the other, is all but impossible. Some provisions of the Bill, the Schedule A., the 10*l.* franchise, and the representation of the large towns for instance, are in my opinion absolutely vital. Others, though it would be impossible for me to enter into a previous understanding that I would allow them to be carried against me, might be altered without my considering such alterations as placing me under the necessity of abandoning the measure. Our situation then is this: We have no certainty of being able to carry even the second reading, and if we got successfully over that stage of the proceeding, with the assistance of Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe, no security that the Bill might not be completely defeated in the Committee, with the certainty of the consequences which I have described.

You will easily conceive that these considerations are daily and hourly pressed upon me,* with increased earnestness, by those who think the character of the Government and the peace of the country equally staked on the success of this measure; and the newspapers will have shown you the impatience which is felt and expressed for a creation of Peers. My aversion to this measure it is unnecessary to repeat. The King cannot be more anxious to avoid it than I am, and I would expose myself to great personal risk for that

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* I well remember how very strong was the pressure to which my father here refers, and which was about this time put upon him, to induce him to have immediate recourse to a large creation of Peers. Almost all his best and oldest friends were of opinion, that this measure ought not to be delayed. My uncle, Lord Ponsonby, through my mother, urged him in the strongest manner to adopt it at once. Two letters to the

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same effect were written to her by Mr. Sydney Smith (see his Memoir by Lady Holland, vol. ii. p. 318, where, however, the letter is obviously misdated; and also p. 335). In the last of the letters referred to, Mr. Sydney Smith, after urging that my father should either immediately create Peers or resign, declares it to be the general opinion of his friends that this is the course he ought to take, and says 'Mackintosh, Whishaw, Robert Smith, Rogers, Luttrell, Jeffrey, Sharpe, Ord, Macaulay, Fazakerley, Lord Ebrington,—where will you find a better jury, or one more able and more willing to consider every point connected with the honour, character, and fame of Lord Grey? There would not be among them a dissentient voice.' This letter was obviously written for the purpose of being shown to my father, and did not exaggerate the unanimity in favour of the course it recommended of those upon whose judgment and friendship he most relied. This general concurrence of opinion had produced so much effect upon my own mind, that I took the opportunity one evening, when we were alone in the dining-room after the ladies had left it, to express to him the great fear I entertained, lest he might be making a mistake in deferring a measure so generally regarded by his friends and supporters as being urgently necessary. He answered that he had considered the question most deeply; that he was quite aware of its extreme importance both to the nation and to himself; that, as to himself, the loss of the Reform Bill a second time in the House of Lords would be fatal to his character as a public man, and make his whole long political life a failure; but he must play the game his own way; that he was convinced a premature creation of Peers, instead of securing the passing of the Bill, would diminish the chances of its success; and that he would not suffer himself to be driven into acting until in his own judgment the proper time for doing so was come. I answered that I was quite content with the assurance that he had considered the matter thus carefully; that I was sure his judgment upon the question was more to be relied upon than that of any of his advisers; and that I hoped he would continue to act upon it.

purpose. Nothing but absolute necessity shall ever induce me to press this measure upon the King; but unless I can be justified by a satisfactory assurance that, on the second reading at least, a majority is certain, what am I to do, what answer am I to give to those who urge me to take a step which they represent, I fear too truly, is absolutely necessary for the security of the Throne, and for the peace of the country, if the passing of the Bill cannot otherwise be secured?

We had a most triumphant debate last night in the House of Commons. The speakers, Lord Palmerston and Mr. Stanley, were very effective, and the division excellent.*

We are considering a partial report from the Tithe Committee, to be formed on the principle of recommending a complete alteration of the present system, and an addition in the meantime, by a temporary Bill, to the powers of the Government to put an end to the present combined and increasing resistance to the legal demands of the clergy.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 353.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Feb. 12, 1832.

My dear Lord,—Your Lordship's letter of the 10th reached me by post yesterday morning; but the King having given me particular instructions for the answer, and having desired to see it before it went, it has not been in my power to reply to it earlier.

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* Mr. Courtenay had moved for papers respecting an expedition prepared in this country against the then government of Portugal (that of Dom Miguel). The Opposition severely censured the Government for having countenanced the expedition: the motion was rejected, after a long debate, by 274 to 139.

His Majesty has learnt with regret that your Lordship now views, with so little satisfaction, any intimation of the disposition of some of the opponents of the Bill to vote for the second reading, without any assurance, beyond that of a confident hope, of their being able to carry that point; for, in consequence of what had passed at various periods, His Majesty has received an impression that your Lordship attached great importance to the exercise of His Majesty's influence and that of others, towards obtaining from some of the opponents an assurance to that extent, provided it should not be clogged with any stipulation, that the expression of their readiness to bring the Bill into Committee should be met by the assurance of facilities to be given, and modifications to be introduced.

Such was the spirit in which the King understood that your Lordship wished him to communicate with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Worcester, or any others who had opposed the first Bill; and His Majesty in consequence invited the Archbishop to the Pavilion, and spoke to him, and ordered me to speak to the Bishop of Worcester. I wrote in the same sense to Lord Chandos with your Lordship's knowledge and consent; and my communications with Lord Wharncliffe have, as you are aware, been directed to the same end.

In looking back, by His Majesty's order, to the correspondence which has passed on this subject, I find a very distinct expression of your sentiments in a letter dated 10th January, in which you acknowledged the receipt of the account of my conversation with Lord Wharncliffe on the 8th of that month. Your words are, 'I confess I do not quite understand the principle on which Lord Wharncliffe seems inclined to act. Why, if the principle of the Bill is admitted, should he not go into Committee to correct it in any of the details which he may think objectionable? Is there not the same power to oppose there what appears to him to be contrary to the public interests, as upon the second reading to resist the principle of the Bill, to which, however reluctantly, he feels it necessary to assent? We have done a good deal to obviate objections, and to afford grounds for suffering the Bill to go to a Committee to those who before opposed it; and though we may think ourselves precluded from going further at present, it does not follow, with respect to certain parts of the details, that the opinion of the Government might not be overruled in the Committee. Surely this would be a safer and more reasonable course for those who admit the necessity of Reform, than to afford reason for doubting the sincerity of that profession by directly opposing the Bill in the stage in which its principle alone is in question.'

'I cannot urge these arguments, as in doing so I might appear to be holding out a hope that I was prepared to be beaten upon points which I would not previously surrender. I need not tell you that such a course of conduct is utterly incompatible with my notions of what a public man, both in honour and duty, is bound to do. I would, therefore, strenuously maintain all the provisions of the Bill which I think justified by considerations of expediency, though, as they may differ in importance, it would become a question for subsequent consideration, whether any alterations which might be made were such as to injure the principle and efficiency of the Bill to such a degree as to compel the Ministers, in conformity with their repeated declarations, to abandon it. But this also is what I could not say to any of the opposers of the measure, and only in the strictest confidence to those who support it.'

To this, which I have taken the liberty of transcribing to save you the trouble of a reference, I replied on the 11th January :—' I have had the honour of submitting your letter to the King, to whom it has proved very satisfactory, as it not only appears to him to offer a confirmation of the opinion he has not ceased to entertain, of your decidedly sharing the reluctance with which he would resort to the alternative of adding to the House of Lords for the object in view ; but as it also affords additional ground for the impression which is strong in his mind, that the necessity for adopting it might be averted by a free and dispassionate discussion in the Committee of the points of detail at issue ; and if a clear understanding could be established, that many of those who would engage in it are prepared to meet more than half way (which His Majesty verily believes to be the case), and that the object of both parties is accommodation, and a desire to afford facilities, while the dread of seeming to make a sacrifice of consistency impedes the approach to so important an object.

'I am quite sensible of the objections on principle to your Lordship's making an admission to this extent otherwise than in the strictest confidence, and to those who support the measure; and I beg you will feel assured that, in all I have had occasion to say on the subject, I have most carefully avoided to commit you, and that I shall continue to observe that caution. I have in fact merely expressed my general conviction of your disposition to meet in the same spirit any conciliatory steps which might be taken by those opposed to the Bill.

'This is the assurance I have again this day given to Lord Wharncliffe, who has been with the King in consequence of a note from him, which I beg to enclose.'

The King has ordered me to observe that this correspondence took place pending that between himself and your Lordship, and his other confidential servants, on the subject of the addition to the Peerage for the purpose of carrying the Bill; and that although His Majesty, in his conversation with you on the 4th January, signified his readiness to concede that point, and confirmed it in a written communication on the following day, and had, in reply to a minute, stated the extent to which he had prevailed upon himself, from a general view of circumstances, and a belief of the necessity of the case, to consent to a measure to which he felt so strong a repugnance, he had not ceased to flatter himself that means would be found to avert that fatal necessity; and to dwell upon the expectation that the more moderate opponents would eventually consent to vote for the second reading, without attaching any stipulations or previous understanding to such consent; and that such proceeding would be met with a tacit disposition to afford facilities to the discussion in Committee, in the sense and to the extent expressed in your Lordship's letter of the 10th January. His Majesty is aware that nothing to this effect is introduced in the Minute of Cabinet, or the letters which passed between your Lordship and him with respect to the addition to the Peerage; and that this dreaded measure was proposed and admitted with the avowed view of *carrying the Bill*; but all that has passed has shown the complete understanding that no effort should be wanting to avert the threatened evil, and that it would not be resorted to while there remained a hope of carrying the Bill without it.

It had been suggested to the King, that a knowledge of his assent to this contingency might have the effect of influencing some who were hesitating from a belief that he could never be brought to consent to it; and he suffered Lord Camden to leave Brighton with the conviction, that his remonstrance had come too late, and Lord Wharncliffe and others to infer that the Bill would be so carried if such an extraordinary and objectionable expedient should become necessary.

In all this the King has acted with a determination to promote the ends of his Government; and in what he now states he does not mean to retract any assurance given to your Lordship and his other confidential servants, nor to admit the possibility of an inference that he is capable of receding from the pledge given. But he cannot conceal the regret and the alarm with which he imagines that he traces in your letter to me of the 10th inst. a greater disinclination than had been previously manifested, to attach some importance to the consent of some of the opponents to vote for the second reading, and to a discussion in committee of the details, which might facilitate a settlement of the question at issue. It is true that the numbers who may concur in this vote are not known; but this is not the objection now stated by your Lordship, nor the reason assigned for the apparent change in the view you take of the question. You now object, that although they should enable you to carry the second reading, with respect to the Committee, everything is left in the state of the greatest uncertainty; that *there* such alterations may be made as would not be less fatal to the Bill than its rejection on the second reading; and you proceed to point out very forcibly the danger of such a result, and the impossibility of a previous understanding, that certain points would be secured on the one hand and conceded on the other.

His Majesty orders me to observe, that these objections did not seem to have occurred, or at least to have been considered so serious, when you urged him to use his influence with the Archbishop of Canterbury and others, nor even later when you stated that you did not understand the principle on which Lord Wharncliffe seemed inclined to act; but you now state your apprehension that, even if you should get successfully over that stage of the proceeding, with the assistance of Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe, there is no security that the Bill might not be completely defeated in the Committee with the certainty of the consequences you have described.

The King does not mean to deny the possibility of certain alterations being proposed and carried in the Committee which would, in your opinion, destroy the efficiency of the Bill; but it does not in his view follow that, because they are carried in the House of Lords, they shall be adopted in the House of Commons; and it strikes him that there is every reason to expect that the principle of the Bill and its leading features will have been carried, and that the details which are at issue may become the objects of conference with the House of Commons, and be finally settled in the spirit and to the extent to which you seemed to have made up your mind on the 10th of January.

This, under all circumstances, appears to His Majesty a reasonable expectation; and, if the delay be objected, he observes that he considers this a minor evil as compared with the price which he may be called uponto pay for bringing the question to a more speedy issue, and for carrying the measure without any of those modifications which may be admitted without serious injury to the Bill.

Your Lordship observes, that the considerations to which you have adverted are daily and hourly pressed upon you, with increased earnestness, by those who think the character of the Government and the peace of the country staked on the success of the measure; and that the newspapers will have shown the impatience which is felt and expressed with regard to the creation of Peers.

His Majesty has no doubt that your Lordship is earnestly pressed by some persons to take a step which has not, he fears, at any time, or under any view of the case, been so repugnant to their feelings, as, happily for the honour and dignity of the Crown, in which His Majesty considers that its security consists, it has been to His Majesty's feelings and to yours. But His Majesty was assured by your Lordship on the 4th of January that many of your colleagues felt the strongest objections to this step, although they afterwards joined in the *unanimous* recommendation to His Majesty, that it should be resorted to, if it should become absolutely indispensable. His Majesty cannot imagine that they should have so far abandoned their original sentiments, as to be among those who are now hourly and daily urging you to take the step, without reference to contingencies which may possibly relieve you from the necessity of pressing upon the King, that which may indeed enable you to carry the Bill without any further alteration, but would, as His Majesty has frequently stated, have the effect also of destroying the character and independence of the Peerage, and of making him a party to the degradation of that body.

But supposing even that your Lordship should yield to this urgency, or allow yourself to be influenced by the impatience which is felt and expressed with regard to the creation of Peers, His Majesty wishes to know, what security you have that this step, whether resorted to at present or hereafter, or at any time, will have the effect for which it is intended. The number of Peers to be added was at first estimated at twenty-one: it was afterwards stated that more might be required, but that it was impossible to fix any number; and His Majesty consented that it should be indefinite. Yet there must be some limit; and it cannot be supposed by those who urge your Lordship, that His Majesty would agree to exceed certain bounds. Should forty or fifty be required (and His Majesty trusts he shall never be called upon to consider of an addition to that extent), the King wishes to know, whether there be any security that such number will suffice. It may, indeed, prove equivalent, and more than equivalent, to the number by which the last Bill was rejected; but may not that number be increased by many of those who then voted for it, who are still friendly to the measure, but who feel and are known to have expressed the strongest dislike of an addition to the Peerage for the purpose of carrying the Bill? Your Lordship has admitted the objection to a second edition, if the first should prove insufficient; nor is it likely that it would answer the purpose, as there might be a corresponding falling off in the previous support. The step might, therefore, have been resorted to, twenty-five or thirty Peers added, and the Bill might still be lost (whether by one vote or more would matter little), after incurring the odium of the objectionable step, and the apparent ridicule of having miscalculated that which, in His Majesty's view of the subject, is not susceptible of calculation, and leaving His Majesty saddled with a large share of both.

The King has felt it due to himself, due to your Lordship, due to the country, to state his sentiments and feelings without reserve, not with any view of embarrassing or creating difficulties, nor, as before stated, with the most distant intention of allowing any ground for inference, that he is disposed to retract, or that his support will not continue steady and honest as it has ever been; but in order to endeavour to impress upon your Lordship the conviction which he himself feels, of the necessity of taking advantage of every resource, every overture, which may occur towards avoiding an alternative which, in His Majesty's opinion, has not the merit even of certainty or security.

His Majesty trusts also that your Lordship will see, in the anxious though possibly strong expression of his feelings, a further proof, if indeed any had been wanting, of his earnest desire for the stability of your Administration.

The character of the debate in the House of Commons on Mr. Courtenay's motion, and the division have given the King very sincere satisfaction.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 354.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

Downing Street, Feb. 13, 1832.

My dear Sir,—I last night received your letter of yesterday, and must confess that it has made a very painful impression upon me.

It conveys an expression of His Majesty's regret, in terms amounting almost to disapprobation, of my now 'viewing, with so little satisfaction, any intimation of the disposition of some of the opponents of the Bill to vote for the second reading, without any assurance beyond that of a confident hope of being able to carry that point;' and reminding me, that 'I had attached great importance to the exercise of His Majesty's influence and that of others, towards obtaining from some of our opponents an assurance to that extent, provided it should not be clogged with any stipulations, that the expression of their readiness to bring the Bill into Committee should be met by the facilities to be given, and modifications to be introduced.

It is stated with perfect correctness, that I did express much anxiety for the use of His Majesty's influence with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Worcester, as well as with any other Peers who might be likely to yield to it, to prevent the rejection of the present Bill on the second reading. But in this I cannot think that there was any thing inconsistent with what I stated in my last letter, which was written confessedly in great haste, from a desire that His Majesty should be apprized of all the difficulties of my situation as soon as possible, looking forward to the necessity of my laying them before him in a more detailed and more careful statement.

I have never concealed from His Majesty my apprehension of the disastrous, I might say the fatal, consequences that must attend a second defeat of the Reform Bill, in whatever mode that defeat may be effected. I have, with the concurrence of His Majesty's other servants, stated to him without reserve, that if those consequences could be averted by no other means, the very distressing expedient of resorting to such a creation of Peers as would ensure success, which could be justified by nothing but the most imminent danger, might become a matter of absolute necessity. I have at the same time uniformly expressed a repugnance, amounting to aversion, to such a measure; and my earnest desire, therefore, if I could have any satisfactory assurance of such a support as would enable me to carry the Bill beyond the second reading, and without its being altered to an extent that would be equally fatal to it in the Committee, to conciliate, by every means in my power, the acquiescence at least, if not the active assistance, of some of its former opponents.—

It was with these views that I thought great advantage might be derived from the communications to which you have referred; but it was absolutely necessary that, before the Bill came to the House of Lords, they should be brought to something like a definite result; and it was in consequence of the complete failure of all our endeavours, up to this moment, to obtain any thing specific on which reliance might be placed, that I expressed myself as not deriving the same satisfaction from Lord Wharncliffe's last communication as it appeared to you to afford.

For what in truth does it amount to but the same vague declaration of a disposition, or, if you will, a resolution, to support the second reading, of which we have heard so much; but without any statement of the numbers, this being the essential point, who would concur in that line of conduct? This too is accompanied with a threat, if any Peers are created, of determined opposition; on the propriety of which as applied to the exercise of the King's prerogative, or on its consistency when made by a person who declares that his acquiescence in the measure of Reform has been produced by his conviction of its being necessary to the peace of the country, I will make no observation.

The time is now come, as the Bill may be expected to be brought to the House of Lords by the 1st of March, when it is necessary that these things should be left no longer 'dans le vague.' It is felt by us all that we should hardly be justified in introducing the measure there, without something approaching, as nearly as may be, to a certainty of our being able to carry it; and it was to this that my observations were imperfectly and hastily directed.

From this exposition I hope it will be seen, that there has been no deviation from anything I have ever said or done on this subject. My aversion to the measure of creating Peers, if it can be safely dispensed with, is undiminished; those of my colleagues who concurred with me most strongly in a sentiment which was common to all, remain also unchanged; but we look with increased apprehension to the chances of failure, and to the fatal consequences which would ensue.

In any assurance given me personally by Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe, believing them to be men of unimpeachable honour, I should place implicit confidence. But can they rely on the assurances, or, rather, on the expectations held out to them by others? I *know* that there are some who have stated undisguisedly that, in voting for the second reading, their object is to lull me into security; to exempt themselves from the odium of voting against the principle of Reform; and, this vote past, to seize the first opportunity of uniting against the Government to insure its overthrow by destroying the efficiency of the measure. It is by no means certain, that even this interested and false support of the second reading may not be overruled by a peremptory mandate from the Duke of Wellington, who will hear of no compromise, and who in his intimate circle, according to information which I have received, and the accuracy of which it is hardly possible to doubt, has declared that his great object is to prevent a creation of Peers before the second reading, without which he feels quite certain of its rejection; and which, if it should take place, would secure me, with the support of the King and the people, against all the attacks which they might afterwards make. All this comes, as I have stated, from a very important source; and I must confess, that though by nature not suspicious, I have been taught, by the conduct of the Opposition on many occasions, to believe them capable of any manœuvre which might promise success to their measures.

In circumstances such as these, to which may be added the unceasing and bitter hostility of the opponents of the Government, and the secret ill-will of those who, reluctantly assenting to the necessity of some reform, though they do not engage, at this moment, in active opposition, carefully abstain from affording any support to the Government,—with all these circumstances, I say, pressing upon me, when the crisis is approaching, and the vital interests concerned in its result are every day exposed to greater danger, is it inconsistent with anything that I wrote, either on the 10th January or at any other time, that I should now seek for something more explicit than I have hitherto been able to obtain; and that, with a precipice before me, I should not wish to approach it with my eyes hoodwinked? Indeed, in the answer quoted by you to that letter of the 10th January, the necessity of a 'clear understanding' with those who are now disposed to assent to the principle of the Bill, as to the extent to which they would go, is distinctly admitted, and strengthens the case which I have been endeavouring to make in my own vindication.

As to the ground on which the eventual necessity of creating Peers was contemplated, and of the sincere desire of myself and of every member of His Majesty's Government to avert that necessity, I need not add anything to what I have repeatedly said on that subject, except that nothing has been wanting on our part to ascertain, as far as possible, the probable support which we might have on the second reading; and to conciliate, as far as we could do so, the feelings of those from whom such support might be expected. The difficulty of entering into communications for this purpose must be known to you, and that we have not found the means of diminishing it, is in itself a proof of the union subsisting between our adversaries in their general views, though there may be some divergence in the course which they are pursuing.

However, I will make a further effort to obtain some thing more categorical. I have accordingly made an appointment with Lord Harrowby, whom I have just left in the Tithe Committee, for to-morrow, when it is my intention to state to him distinctly my view of the present situation of affairs and of the consequences involved in it; and to obtain from him, if possible, some data on which it may be safe to act, with respect to the amount and the extent of the support which we may expect from him. If this should prove satisfactory, much embarrassment and distress may be avoided; if otherwise, it will be for His Majesty's servants carefully to consider at their meeting on Wednesday, what advice they should give him. For myself, the decision is easy.

There is nothing I would not do to give ease and comfort to His Majesty's mind; and if by doing so I could hope to produce this effect, I would to-morrow humbly tender to His Majesty the resignation of my office,—with no other regret than that which would accompany my separation from so kind and indulgent a master.

What I have already said has been, I trust, sufficient to remove from me the imputation of any such alteration of my views as would amount to inconsistency. A change of views produced by conviction, I shall never be ashamed to acknowledge; but, in this instance, I trust His Majesty will see that the question being the success of the Bill, on which I believe the peace of the country, both external and internal, to depend, it was necessary that, as the crisis approached, His Majesty's Government should know on what they have to depend. The three cardinal points of the bill, viz. Schedule A., the 10*l.* franchise, and the extension of the elective franchise to large towns being secured, I could make large concessions with respect to any other alterations, though there might be some that I should strongly deprecate; and upon these the King's suggestion of a conference with the House of Commons might lead to a satisfactory result. But on the three points stated above, this expedient could not be resorted to: there would be, on the loss of any of them, an expression of the public feeling no less general and no less strong, than if the second reading were negatived.

Of the difficulty stated by His Majesty as to any calculation that could be previously made of the addition which, under the circumstances contemplated, might be required, I am fully sensible; and I have no hesitation in saying, that if Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe were to take a decided part with the Opposition, not less than the largest number stated by you could be expected to make the thing safe. Perhaps I am rather premature in stating this, but I am anxious that the whole matter should be brought, in its fullest extent, under His Majesty's contemplation, before any further advice is tendered to him by the Cabinet.

For His Majesty's support, distinguished as it has been by a degree of sincerity and confidence which every body acquainted with his character must have expected, I must on this occasion, as on so many others, offer to His Majesty the expression of my deep and indelible gratitude; and I should have proved myself unworthy of all the favour and kindness I have received, if I could have suspected for a moment that His Majesty was 'disposed to retract' an assurance once given, or that 'his support would not continue as steady and as honest as it has ever been.'

I have written this under much interruption, and so pressed in point of time, that I hope any inaccuracy that may have escaped me will be allowed for.

In the earlier part of the morning I was at the Tithe Committee, which I left deliberating upon a report, the chief features of which had been agreed upon. Its object will be to state the necessity of some immediate measure to check the resistance to the law; to afford some relief to the clergy, who, by an illegal combination, have been deprived of their dues; and also the opinion of the Committee, that an alteration of system will be required by an extinction of tithes, to be commuted for a charge on the land, in such manner as to secure the revenues of the Church; and to prevent future collision between the parochial clergy and the occupiers of land. From the accounts received from Lord Anglesey and Sir H. Vivian, I am not without fear that there will be much difficulty in the execution of such a measure, of the success of which there could be no hope, without the accompanying assurance of an intention to correct the present grievance.

Before a measure of this sort, however, can be completed, it will be necessary that the Committee should obtain much more extensive information. Stanley, who has just been here, informs me that they are proceeding in the same course in the Committee of the House of Commons.

I have just heard that Prince Lieven has this morning received dispatches from Petersburg, informing him that Count Orloff (an aide-de-camp of the Emperor) is to be sent immediately on a mission to the Hague, the object of which is to determine the King of the Netherlands to adopt the resolutions of the Conference, and to declare to him, if he does not, that the Emperor will abandon him entirely, and recognise the independence and neutrality of Belgium as established.

Count Orloff is to come from the Hague to London to give an account of his mission.

I am sorry to say that there can be no longer any doubt of the cholera at Rotherhithe and Limehouse, that there has been one case in Southwark, and another on board the Marine Hospital Ship (the Dreadnought) at Greenwich.

I am now obliged to go to the House of Lords, where I hope there will be nothing to call for any exertion on my part, to which at this moment I am perfectly unequal. Once more excuse haste and inaccuracies.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 355.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.). Brighton, Feb. 14, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have had the honour of receiving and of submitting your Lordship's letter of yesterday to the King, who has expressed his pleasure that I should reply to it by this night's post; his desire that no delay should take place being increased by the intimation of the intended meeting of his confidential servants, to-morrow, when they would consider what advice they should submit to him.

The feeling that time was wearing on, and things ought not longer to be left 'dans le vague,' is that which had produced His Majesty's anxiety for a thorough understanding of what seemed to him to require explanation; and the instructions he gave me to enter minutely, as I did in my letter of the 12th inst., into all that had passed on the subject of the second reading of the Bill in the House of Lords, &c., as it seemed to bear on the more recent expression of your Lordship's feeling. His Majesty orders me to assure you that, however strong has been his regret, and the candid expression of it, that the disposition of the opponents of the Bill to vote for the second reading should now be considered of less value than it was at earlier periods, it was furthest from his intention or thoughts to express anything like a feeling of disapprobation; and if such has unfortunately been the impression which my letter conveys, I take blame to myself for having ill-expressed His Majesty's sentiments, and for not having done justice to the spirit in which he has invariably viewed your proceedings and your opinions, even when they may not have accorded altogether with his own considerations of the questions at issue.

The King, however, does not regret that the correspondence which has recently passed, should have led to a statement of the grounds of what had appeared to him a change of opinion, as to the value of any support obtained towards bringing the Bill into Committee; and His Majesty admits that those which your Lordship has assigned are deserving of serious consideration, and fully justify a strong impression of the difficulty of your situation. But His Majesty thinks that you attach too little value to the various considerations which may influence those who would vote for the second reading, without any feeling or intention of *ulterior* hostility; or that you view with too much suspicion their motives for committing themselves to that extent. Of the Duke of Wellington's determined and uncompromising hostility the King is well aware; but he is aware also that it is carried to an extent which has alarmed and alienated many of those who had felt disposed to follow in his wake, and that communications have taken place which have tended to increase the difference of opinion and feeling. His Majesty has felt anxious that advantage should be taken of those divisions in the enemy's camp; and partaking, as he does most cordially, of the 'aversion' to the measure of adding to the House of Lords which your Lordship has so strongly expressed, it has been his earnest wish, and he has omitted no opportunity of stating it, that nothing should be neglected which could have the effect of producing or improving any desire to conciliate and to accommodate, whether arising out of a friendly feeling, out of apprehension of the consequences of a second rejection, or out of differences existing among the opponents. His Majesty has never denied his apprehension of the difficulty of coming to any previous understanding; but it has been produced more from his sense of the suspicion entertained on both sides, and of the fear of committing themselves and appearing to show want of consistency, than from any sense of the impossibility of reconciling the points at issue, and of introducing such modifications as might secure the support of some of the opponents, without affecting the principle of the Bill, or reducing its efficiency in any essential degree. Hence appears to His Majesty to have arisen chiefly the failure of every attempt as yet made to come to an understanding; and it is natural that those who are called upon for something more explicit, and to pledge themselves to give their support upon explicit terms, should expect to be met on the same footing. And, after all, it appears to His Majesty, from your letter of yesterday, that the question is brought within a very narrow compass, or he has been very much misinformed as to the views of those who profess themselves to be friendly. Your Lordship's object is to secure, beyond the possibility of doubt, what you call the three cardinal points,—Schedule A., the extension of the elective franchise to large towns, and the 10*l.* franchise. His Majesty considers the first to be conceded; that, as to the second, the only objection upon which any stress is laid, is the advantage of giving in each case two members; and the King is himself disposed to consider that this would be an improvement. Upon the third there appears to be much diversity of opinion among the opponents; and adverting to this circumstance, and the importance which some of them may attach to an amicable arrangement, His Majesty cannot but indulge a hope that, if it should prove the only essential obstacle, it will be removed. But what your Lordship has stated of your feeling with regard to other points, and of your readiness to abide, with respect to those of which you should deprecate the abandonment, the eventual result of conference with the House of Commons, appears to His Majesty to hold out a fairer hope than he had yet ventured to indulge, of the satisfactory issue of a further communication with Lord Harrowby. His Majesty has accordingly learnt with great pleasure, that you had made an appointment with him for this day, and that you intended to state to him distinctly your view of the present situation of affairs, and of the consequences involved in it; and to obtain from him, if possible, some data with respect to the amount and the extent of the support you may expect from him. This is the point to which it has long been His Majesty's desire to bring things, and he does not despair of a result which may relieve you and himself from the pressure of the present difficulty. But if this effort should unfortunately fail, the difficulty must be provided for; and your Lordship will not find the King fail you in the hour of need, being satisfied that every attempt will have been made to avert the necessity of the dreaded alternative.

So much has been written on this subject, that I should be unwilling to take up your time with anything further relating to it, if I did not consider it necessary, and indeed had not been charged by the King, to acquaint you that I saw Lord Wharncliffe yesterday, and that I confirmed the information he had already received in London, that the minute of his communication had not proved satisfactory, &c. He observed to me, and authorised me to repeat, that "although he did not feel at liberty, in consequence of anything that had yet passed, to state names or numbers, he had no hesitation in declaring that, between absentees and voters, the effect of the aid he had held out would be to carry the second reading by something approaching to twenty votes. That, although he and his friends could not pledge themselves as to the course they would take in Committee, when those with whom they had communicated showed no inclination, or did not feel at liberty to commit themselves to anything in return, it could hardly be supposed, after what had been proposed by Lord Harrowby and himself, that they would now refuse to concede to that extent, with this saving clause, however, that the expectation of obtaining something in return, had induced them to propose more than they should consider necessary, if they came free to the discussion.

He was not surprised that their overtures should not be entertained with the confidence to which he considered them to be entitled, as in the present state of party, and of feeling on this question, it was very difficult to calculate how this or that individual might be influenced by considerations and occurrences not now contemplated; but this was a difficulty he also had to contend with, as it applied to the line to be taken by himself and his friends. They were detaching themselves from the body of their party; and if the effect of such proceeding should be the success of the Bill as introduced from the House of Commons, they would have incurred all the inconvenience and the odium of the measure, and of their connivance at its success, without securing any advantage which could justify the line they took. This was the substance of his communication, except that he said he believed that an interview would take place between your Lordship and Lord Harrowby.

His Majesty is looking forward with much interest and anxiety to the result of the deliberations in the Committees of both Houses on the question of Tithes; and he is quite sensible of the importance and the difficulty of the subject.

The information which Prince Lieven has received from Petersburg appears to His Majesty of the highest importance, and has given him great satisfaction. He desired me to thank your Lordship for noticing it.

Your report of the near approach of the cholera unfortunately confirms the information which had reached His Majesty from other quarters, and I fear that the mortality will be great in the crowded and dirty quarters in which it has broken out.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 356.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, Feb. 14, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—In consequence of my letter of yesterday, the King will probably expect to hear the result of my appointed interview with Lord Harrowby.

Last night, as we were leaving the House of Lords, he expressed to me a desire to put off our meeting till Thursday, as he expected by that time to know the determination of some Peers with whom he had communicated on the subject of the Reform Bill. I of course could not object to a delay founded on such a motive.

I am sorry to say the cholera is spreading though not rapidly. There is a case reported to-day from Clapham, one from Lambeth, and another from Marylebone, with some additions in the places where it first appeared.

I cannot close my letter without stating that Wood had last night a very satisfactory conversation with Lord Sandon on the probable accession of strength in the House of Lords. He spoke of twenty-five Peers as engaged to vote for the second reading who had before opposed it. If I could have any security for this, my mind would be relieved from a weight which is becoming every day more distressing to me.

With this appearance of the spreading of the cholera, would it not be better for the King to take up his residence at Windsor?

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 357.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Feb. 15, 1832.

My dear Lord,—The King was not sorry to learn from the letter I had the pleasure of receiving from your Lordship this morning, that your interview with Lord Harrowby had been deferred until to-morrow, that he might have more time to ascertain the sentiments of some Peers with whom he had communicated. His Majesty attaches the greatest importance to what may pass at this interview, and looks to its result with intense anxiety. His hopes have been raised by your report of Mr. Wood's conversation with Lord Sandon, as well as by a note I received last night from Lord Wharncliffe, who mentioned that he was going to town to assist, and that a letter he had received from another friend gave him better hopes than anything he had seen.

Should these communications produce the desired effect, the King is satisfied that you and he will sincerely congratulate yourselves hereafter on having persisted in the endeavour to carry the measure by conciliatory means, rather than by resorting to a step to which he believes you to be as adverse as he is, on the honourable, constitutional, and high-minded principle which has influenced your conduct through life. His Majesty had, indeed, not scrupled to place himself in your hands, because he has felt confident that you were not disposed, as some others may be, to view this question (so objectionable in itself, so dangerous as a precedent) as one of expediency or of opinion, but as one of dire necessity, to which feeling must be sacrificed, when that painful sacrifice shall be imposed by a sense of duty arising out of the conviction, that an evil of greater magnitude could not be otherwise averted, and that it is more consistent with the interests of all classes of his Majesty's subjects, and therefore with the obligations of his station, that he should incur an evil and an inconvenience of which the extent is defined, than the risk and almost the certainty of a state of things of which the consequences could not be foreseen, nor the extent calculated.

The King is not ignorant to what degree your Lordship is urged and pressed by many who do not feel as you and he do on this point of adding to the Peerage, and who seem callous to the discredit which it may bring upon their body. He is not ignorant that they are endeavouring to drive you to the hasty adoption of a step which may not have become necessary, and to raise suspicions of the honesty and good faith of those who wish to come to some understanding, which shall prevent your making any attempt to secure by conciliation the result, and induce you to resort at once to a step which they treat with so much indifference. But His Majesty trusts you will not yield to this urgency, but that you will consult your own good feeling, and be guided by your own liberal sentiments in coming to a decision upon what shall be proposed to you.

In saying and in urging this, however, His Majesty desires he may be clearly understood; that he is far from wishing you to place the question in a situation which shall render its issue uncertain; and that he considers that if those who profess a disposition to support the second reading shall come to any understanding which shall offer ground for giving up the option which you have, to propose an addition to the House of Lords for the purpose of carrying the Bill, it must be clearly established that they are thereby pledged to carry the Bill subject to that understanding, and without introducing or supporting any alterations which shall be at variance with it. Unless you shall receive assurances which afford full security to this extent, His Majesty cannot expect you to commit yourself, or to risk uselessly the abandonment of an alternative which is at your option. The King has no objection to your stating to Lord Harrowby that such is his view of the rule on which you would be justified to proceed, if you think such communication calculated to forward the object of your interview.

His Majesty has learnt with extreme concern that the cholera is spreading, and is very sensible of the kind feeling which induces your Lordship to suggest that he should at once take up his residence at Windsor; but His Majesty is unwilling to alter his arrangements which, at any rate, had not been made with a view to a prolonged stay in London. He had intended, and still means, to go to St. James's for ten or twelve days, and afterwards to come from Windsor for court days and other occasions, as may be necessary and usual. He has no apprehension of the cholera, and does not think it right to excite alarm by appearing to run away from it.

I have, &c.

H. TAYLOR.

No. 358.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

Downing Street, Feb. 15, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—Being obliged to go to the Committee, and to leave a great deal of business to be got rid of afterwards, I have now only time to acknowledge your letter of yesterday, and once more to beg you to express to His Majesty my grateful sense of the sentiments which you have been instructed to convey to me. Nothing can be more satisfactory to me than your letter is in every respect; and I shall go with a new heart to the further consideration of this difficult and complicated business. We shall of course talk it over to-day at our Cabinet dinner, though the members of the House of Commons will be unavoidably absent; but we can come to no decision till after my interview with Lord Harrowby to-morrow. Be assured that I shall go to it with every disposition to conciliate, and to treat the matter with perfect frankness, and also with an increased hope of a satisfactory result.

I happened by accident to be present yesterday in the House of Commons, hardly ever going there, when a conversation arose upon what I had said in the House of Lords on the resistance to the payment of tithes. Lord Althorp gave a most satisfactory explanation, of which advantage was taken by Sir R. Peel to create a false impression of the conduct of Ministers, and to throw as much difficulty as he could in the way of our measures. Althorp answered him simply, and clearly, and satisfactorily, but too good-naturedly. Stanley unfortunately was not there at the time, but came in afterwards and made a very useful statement. I would have given a great deal to be able to answer for myself.

I will write to-morrow after my interview with Lord Harrowby.

Ever, &c. GREY.

Since the enclosed report of cholera came out, twelve new cases, near London Bridge on the Southwark side, have been reported. The Clapham case turns out not to have been cholera, and it is not true that one had occurred in Marylebone.

No. 359.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Feb. 16, 1832.

My dear Lord,—After all that has recently passed on the subject of some accommodation with the more moderate opponents, and the anxiety the King has felt that the disposition manifested on both sides should be improved and brought to bear, it is hardly necessary that I should asure your Lordship that your letter to me of yesterday's date has been perused by the King with sincere pleasure, and that he looks forward eagerly to a result which you contemplate with increased hope. His Majesty, however, does not shut his eyes to the difficulties of this complicated business, and is therefore, as I stated to you yesterday, quite prepared for the failure of this endeavour to come to a satisfactory understanding, and for the necessity of resorting to the alternative which he and you alike deprecate.

The King is glad to learn that the declarations or explanations made by Lord Althorp and Mr. Stanley, relative to what you had said in the House of Lords on the resistance to the payment of tithes, was satisfactory to you, though he hopes that you will have an opportunity of answering for yourself. His Majesty received yesterday a very clear and able report of what had passed from Mr. Stanley, and was much pleased with his report to the House of Commons. He is not so much surprised as heretofore at the line of opposition taken by Sir Robert Peel, much as he regrets it, as in the course of the communications which have been the subject of my recent correspondence with your Lordship His Majesty has understood that Sir Robert Peel shares the violence of the Duke of Wellington, and is as little inclined to a conciliatory course on the Reform Bill; and he believes this to have contributed to alarm those who look with apprehension to the consequences of a second rejection of the measure.

The King is glad to find that the report of cholera cases at Clapham and in Marylebone proves incorrect, and he has ordered me to mention to your Lordship that he has placed Cumberland Lodge and its extensive offices and stables at the disposal of Lord Hill, for the accommodation of the married men of the Guards and Household Cavalry.

I have, &c. H. Taylor.

No. 360.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, Feb. 16, 1832.

My dear Sir,—I have to thank you, as I do most sincerely, for the very satisfactory letter which I have had from you this morning.

The statement of the King's feeling with respect to the sort of assurance I had a right to expect, was everything that I could wish. I read to Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe the passage, which I had His Majesty's permission to communicate to them; and though they made no remark upon it, I cannot doubt its having been productive of a good effect.

My interview with them has lasted so long, that being obliged to be at the Tithe Committee at four, to consider the report, and at the House of Lords afterwards, I have no time for details. I must refer you, therefore, to the enclosed memorandum, of which they have a copy, for the result. Nothing could be more amicable than our whole conversation, and I hope His Majesty will be assured that nothing was wanting on my part in manifesting a conciliatory disposition. But you will observe that nothing certain or definite is stated in their expression of the confidence with which they look to the support they expect on the second reading; nothing distinct even as to the number; names they decline to specify; and they admit that even *those* on whom they count may fail them before the vote. All they will pledge themselves for, is not to deceive me as to their own views and intentions, but they cannot give any security that they may not themselves be deceived.

This is not so satisfactory as I hoped, but I am disposed to risk a great deal to carry the measure without the necessity of creating Peers. This is, however, a matter requiring the most serious deliberation, and I cannot come to an ultimate decision without the concurrence of my colleagues, some of whom, and especially the Chancellor, are impressed with the danger of going to the second reading, without something as near certainty as is possible in a case of this nature, and of exposing ourselves to the power of a majority in the Committee.

The cholera report of to-day is enclosed. I am in constant fear of its assuming a character of great violence. If it should do so, the alarm, which is already very great, would be excessive; and I do not think it would be increased by the King's going to Windsor.

(Enclosure.)

Minute of Conversation with Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe.

Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe cannot give any positive assurance, which they conceive impossible, of a majority on the second reading; but, from their communications with various Peers, they have a confident expectation and belief that there would be a sufficient number to secure the Bill's passing that stage.

If this should be effected, they feel themselves bound to look to certain alterations in the Committee as essential to render the operation of the Bill safe; and if it should pass the Committee without such alterations, they would be under the necessity of opposing it on the third reading.

Lord Grey on his part stated, that though there were parts of the Bill which might be susceptible of alteration, without his considering such alteration as fatal to it, there were others which he deemed absolutely vital, and in which such changes might be made as would be as destructive of the measure as its rejection on the second reading. If this should take place, he must in that case be considered as reserving to himself the power of resorting to such means as might be most effectual for preventing such a result. Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe are not unwilling to make a declaration of their intention to support the second reading at a proper time—which is a matter for consideration—with the hope that it will be received with a conciliatory spirit.

They further state that they will feel themselves bound, if they should see ground for altering their present opinion as to the support they are likely to receive, to give notice of it to Lord Grey.

No. 361.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, Feb. 17, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—In the hurried letter which I wrote to you yesterday, I am afraid that I expressed too imperfectly the sentiments, with which the communication you had made to me by order of the King had inspired me. I have read your letter over and over again and always with increasing gratitude. That which I have received this morning is not less satisfactory, nor less entitled to my best thanks.

I confess I have been disappointed at not finding Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe enabled to state anything more specific as to the persons whom they consider as pledged to the second reading; they expressly stated that they could give no such pledge, and even admitted that many of those on whom they now count might change their opinions. I do not think any one of those to whom I have as yet communicated what has passed, thinks that this is a sufficient security. We shall have a Cabinet on it on Sunday, and in the interval I shall endeavour to get more light. As yet I see my way only 'as through a glass darkly;' but I am not less anxious to avoid, if possible, the last extremity; and, as I said yesterday, I am disposed to risk a good deal to avert it, though the rejection of the Bill on the second reading would be to me such ruin as never fell upon a public man; which, however, is little compared with its consequences to the country.

I enclose the cholera bulletins for this morning, by which it does not appear that the disease is making much progress here. I am very glad that the King has given up the Great Lodge for the married men of the Guards, &c. I understand it is proposed to allow them an addition of 6*d.* per diem.

I have had sent to me a copy of a most impudent address to the King from the Corporation of Dublin, which they claim a right to present to the King on the throne, and for which they deserve and must receive a rebuke.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 362.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Feb. 17, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I did not delay submitting your Lordship's letter of yesterday and the enclosure to the King, who was anxious, as you would readily imagine, to learn the result of your interview with Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe. His Majesty is concerned to find that it has produced nothing definite or distinct; but he cannot but build some hope on the amicable character of this meeting; and he is quite satisfied that nothing was wanting on your part to conciliate and to carry into effect the object which he and you have so much at heart. His Majesty had, indeed, hoped that those two Lords and their friends were better prepared for communications to which they evidently attached great importance.

With respect to ulterior proceedings, and the extent of the risk which should be run, the King refers your Lordship to what I was ordered to say in my letters of the 15th and yesterday, which he has upon this occasion again perused; and, considering what passed at this interview, His Majesty particularly rejoices that he authorised you to communicate that part of his letter of the 15th to Lord Harrowby, as it could not fail to show them the necessity of coming to an early decision upon the line they should take; and also that His Majesty is acting fairly and above-board with all parties.

His Majesty is aware that the extent of the risk to be incurred is a matter requiring the most serious deliberation, and one on which your Lordship cannot come to an ultimate decision without the concurrence of your colleagues. He trusts they will be guided by the feeling which influences you, and also that they will bear in mind that there may be an interval of three weeks before it is necessary to act upon any decision taken, and that the steps which have been taken may produce something more defined and distinct.

Judging from the reports hitherto made, the King considers the alarm occasioned by the cholera to be greater than its progress warrants, though this may not be a cause of regret, as it will naturally produce greater precautions.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 363.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Feb. 18, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have submitted your Lordship's letter of yesterday to the King, who is extremely pleased that the communications he had ordered me to make to you on the 15th and 16th instant had proved so satisfactory. His Majesty has charged me to assure you again, that no person can be more sensible than he is of the difficulties with which you have to contend, or of the manly and honourable feeling with which you encounter them. He has been all along aware that your Lordship dislikes the thoughts of adding to the House of Lords, for the purpose of carrying the Reform Bill, as much as he does; and he is persuaded that you have not yielded to the urgency of others until you were convinced that this resource might become indispensable. Satisfied as was His Majesty that, upon this occasion, you would sacrifice feeling to necessity, as he has done, and that you would not create the necessity, but would use every exertion to avert it, His Majesty did not hesitate to place the resource at your disposal. Nor have your Lordship's proceedings disappointed his expectations; and His Majesty is satisfied that you will persevere, to the utmost justifiable extent, in your endeavours to effect the object in view, without applying the dreaded alternative.

But His Majesty has already stated most unequivocally, that he does not expect or require you to run any risk, at least not such as it is natural you should deprecate, both as a public man and from your conviction of the consequences which a second failure would bring upon the country. It has been the King's earnest desire and intention to deal fairly and honestly by you; and he feels, and has invariably admitted, that you have a right to claim from him that he should do so, and that he should support you. But His Majesty feels also that his own character, and his security as sovereign of this country in these perilous times, would be seriously committed and endangered by any departure from the honest and straightforward course he has pursued; and that, if he had deceived or abandoned you, He might in the hour of need look in vain for aid from others.

His Majesty will be curious to see the proposed address from the corporation of Dublin, and quite agrees with you as to the necessity of checking such proceedings. He is glad to learn that the cholera is making so little progress.

I have, &c, H. TAYLOR.

No. 364.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, Feb. 19, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I have had the pleasure of receiving your two letters of yesterday, with their enclosures.

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The letter from Sir M. Tierney's brother is that of a sensible man and a sincere well-wisher to the peace and welfare of his country. Nothing can be more just than his remarks on the effect of appearing to submit to a power which can no longer be resisted. Concession is no longer then a boon granted by humanity and justice, but a capitulation extorted from an enemy who has no longer the means of defence. This has been unfortunately the character of everything that has been done with respect to Ireland, and emphatically so in the case of the Catholic question. The Tithe question is brought into a similar situation. All relief has been withheld till it is no longer possible to uphold the present system, or to apply the necessary remedy with a good grace.

It gave me great pleasure to receive the King's approbation of the report of the Tithe Committee. It produced such an ebullition of party violence and animosity last night in the House of Lords as I never witnessed. But I must refer you to the account of the debate in the newspapers. The bitterness of our enemies seems to increase every hour, with an utter recklessness as to the manner in which the interests of the country may be affected, if an opportunity can be found of inflicting a wound on the Ministers.

Matters remain in *statu quo* with respect to my communications with Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe. I have desired Lord Palmerston and Lord Lansdowne to have some conversation with them, which might be of a less formal and, if I may so describe it, of a less diplomatic character, than that which they have had with me. In this manner there may be, perhaps, a hope of our being able to arrive at something more explicit.

I enclose the cholera report of to-day, which is not unsatisfactory. The disease seems not to be increasing here, and to diminish everywhere else.

I return you Mr. Tierney's letter.

* * * * *

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 365.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Brighton, Feb. 19, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have had the honour of submitting your Lordship's letter of yesterday and the enclosed cholera report to the King, who sincerely rejoices that it is in general of so satisfactory a character. His Majesty observed, however, that the general report is hardly a fair one, as it includes cases of common as well as spasmodic, and does not make any classification or distinction between the two, as the first reports from Newcastle did. At least he believes this observation to apply to the *totals*, which, if restricted to cases of spasmodic or Asiatic cholera, would probably be very much reduced.

His Majesty quite agrees with your Lordship in the observations you make upon Mr. Tierney's letter, and upon the character of everything which has been done respecting Ireland, whether as applicable to the Catholic question, the Tithe question, or any of local relief and improvement; the remedy being applied so late that it ceases to be received as an act of grace, but is felt and almost admitted to be extorted.

There is, however, another evil arising out of the violence of party feeling and the influence of local prejudice and animosity,—the conflicting opinions and interests of Protestants and Catholics,—which struck me forcibly when I was in Ireland during the Rebellion in 1798, and which has, I believe, not since decreased: I mean the diminution of value, and consequent effect of any measure of relief or amelioration, or any act of grace, before it reaches the quarter or individual for which intended, in consequence of the channels through which it is conveyed and local misrule. It may be said, in most cases, to be totally changed in its character before it reaches the object; and I do not believe that anything calls for more attention than the means of counteracting such injurious agency.

His Majesty had noticed the strong ebullition of feeling in the House of Lords upon the occasion of the report of the Tithe Committee, and the violence of Lords —— and ——; but he was glad that you had an opportunity of expressing your sentiments, and, as far as he could judge from newspaper reports, what you said appeared to him to have produced the desired impression.

He has learnt with much satisfaction that your Lordship has desired Lord Lansdowne and Lord Palmerston to communicate further with Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe, as he is sensible that the discussion would naturally be more unreserved from being less conclusive, than it would unavoidably be considered when carried on with yourself. It has also the good effect of keeping the question open, and of affording the means of taking immediate advantage of every favourable circumstance which might be forfeited by delay in the intercourse.

I have not seen Lord Wharncliffe, or heard from him, nor do I know whether he has returned from London.

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I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 366.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

Downing Street, Feb. 27, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I intended to have called at St. James's this morning, but I am obliged to go to the Irish Committee, and I shall not have time afterwards before the meeting of the House, where Lord Aberdeen has announced to me his intenion of asking me a question with respect to the French expedition to Italy. I had nothing, however, very material to submit to His Majesty, and if he will be pleased to allow me that honour, I will wait on him to-morrow at three, if another hour should not be more convenient to His Majesty.

I have this morning had a long conversation with the Archbishop of Canterbury, without any satisfactory result. His inclination is to vote for the second reading, but he thinks he could not do so without a loss of character; and this consideration appeared at one time to have decided him, but he reserves the matter for further consideration.

After this conversation was over, he spoke of the answer of the Queen which has appeared in the papers. He showed me his address, in which there certainly was no political allusion; and he thought there was none in the answer, which, he stated most truly, would have been exceedingly improper. The answer in the papers, however, is very differently interpreted; and I regret, most deeply regret, the effect this and other circumstances are producing with respect to Her Majesty.

I enclose a letter I received last night from Lord Wellesley, which affords another proof of the distressing difficulties of my situation.

I am, &c. GREY.

P. S.—I am to see the Archbishop of York tomorrow.

No. 367.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) St. James's Palace, Feb. 27, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have had the honour to submit your Lordship's letter of this day and the enclosure to the King, who orders me to say that he will be glad to see you at three o'clock to-morrow.

His Majesty learnt with much concern, that your conversation with the Archbishop of Canterbury had led to no satisfactory or conclusive result; and he considers the letter from Lord Wellesley (which I return) still more unpleasant, as it refers to Mr. Littleton's communications with Lord Wharncliffe, and particularly with Lord Harrowby, inasmuch as it must lead to the conclusion that he *retains* the sentiments recorded in his letter of 25th or 26th ult.

His Majesty has not seen in any newspaper which has fallen under his notice, the address from the Bishops and the Queen's answer, but the latter was verbal, and His Majesty verily believes as unexceptionable in all respects, and as free from political allusion as possible. Nothing can, in His Majesty's opinion, have been more cautious and guarded than the Queen's conduct for months past; and His Majesty is persuaded that you are too well aware of the manner in which the newspapers distort words and misrepresent facts, as well as of their predilection for any invention that can serve their purpose and make mischief, to suffer their reports to weigh with you.

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I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 368.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) St. James's Palace, Feb. 29, 1831.

My dear Lord,—I have had the honour of submitting your Lordship's letter of this day to the King, who, although he had seen the newspapers, has read with great interest your report of the debate in the House of Lords last night, and your remarks upon the various speeches; and His Majesty ordered me to thank you for the trouble you have taken in sending him this account.

* * * * *

I beg to return the paper your Lordship left with me yesterday, and which I had an opportunity of reading to the King soon after. His Majesty listened to it with attention, but observed that Lord Wellesley appeared to him to take too dark a view of things, though he admits, on the other hand, that Lord Harrowby's letter is not encouraging even in its most favourable light; and he considers the letter itself to be much less objectionable than the abstract he had previously seen.

I wrote last night a memorandum on military discipline and punishments which is now copying, and which I will send to you in the course of the afternoon.

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I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 369.

The King to Earl Grey.

Windsor Castle, March 4, 1832.

The King is persuaded that, while the attention of his Government and of the Legislative bodies is engaged in the consideration of the Reform Bill and of the Irish Tithe question, the extreme importance of the Colonial interests of the country, and the danger which appears to His Majesty to threaten them, cannot have escaped the consideration of Earl Grey and his other confidential servants. Aware, as they must be, of the early and continued interest which His Majesty had taken in the property of the West Indian colonies, and of his declared sentiments, that the maritime and commercial advantage of the mother country is inseparable from the maintenance and the welfare of her colonies, they cannot be surprised that His Majesty should express earnest solicitude with respect to the possible effects of recent occurrences, and should endeavour to impress upon Earl Grey and his colleagues his anxiety, lest they should prove destructive of our tenure of the valuable Windward and Leeward Islands and of Jamaica, unless measures shall be taken which may restore confidence to the proprietors and others concerned in the possession and property of these colonies, by convincing them that the Government is determined to support them, and is not disposed to encourage the projects of those who, under the plea of humanity, are exciting the slaves, and introducing a spirit of discontent, insubordination, and revolt, which must prove fatal to these poor creatures, not less than it is ruinous to the proprietors.

It is not His Majesty's intention to enter into the broad question of the emancipation of slaves in our colonies, or to discuss its policy or its humanity, aware as he is that the abolition of slavery has been decided upon, and that the endeavours of the Government of this country have long been directed to this object; but he is certain that Earl Grey and his other confidential servants will feel the necessity of proceeding with caution in a matter which involves so many interests, and excites so much feeling of contending character; and the importance of discouraging the attempts of those who, callous to these considerations, and to the consequences of the agitation they produce, are constantly advocating and urging a resort to hasty measures. The recent events in Jamaica have offered proof of the mischief which results from the suggestions and the influence of these persons, and have shown how little the objects of their mistaken zeal, or of their intemperate indiscretion, are likely to be benefited by the course they are pursuing; whilst, on the other hand, the eventual effect of those manœuvres, if they should be persisted in, may be to induce the proprietors to seek protection from America or France, as circumstances may suggest; the alternatives being, the ruin of the colonies from insurrections, or the loss of them from the determination of the proprietors to look for support to those states in which the influence of 'Saints' does not prevail to the same degree.

The King requests Earl Grey will be assured that these remarks are intended in the spirit of caution, rather than with the intention of expressing any doubt of the desire of his Government to check the progress of the evil. He acknowledges indeed, with great satisfaction, the effectual and liberal measures which have been adopted to relieve the valuable colony of Barbadoes and others from the immediate pressure of a serious calamity; and he is sensible of the activity and energy which have been displayed by the local authorities in Jamaica, in the suppression of the insurrection there. WILLIAM R.

No. 370.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, March 4, 1832.

My dear Lord,—Your Lordship may possibly have seen a letter from the King to Lord Althorp of the 24th February, relative to a report which had reached His Majesty, that Mr. Hume had called for, or intended to call for, information relating to the interior arrangements and occupations of the royal residences and palaces, and the expense attending such, and the gardens. His Majesty expressed in strong terms his hope that the impertinent interference of Mr. Hume or any other individual, or further attempts to submit the details of the royal establishment to the control and scrutiny of a Committee of the House of Commons, would be resisted, &c.

Lord Althorp waited upon His Majesty on the following day, and, as His Majesty understood him, stated that he was not aware that Mr. Hume had called for returns of the nature which had been reported to His Majesty, or that could be considered objectionable; and assured His Majesty that such undue interference on the part of Messrs. Hume & Co. would be resisted.

His Majesty has, however, since seen a letter from Mr. Spring Rice to the Lord Steward of the Household, dated 23rd February, which although it does not call for returns as to interior arrangements of the Royal residences, such as His Majesty had at first understood Mr. Hume to have required, does call for details and particulars connected with the arrangements of the Royal Household, to an extent which, in His Majesty's view, constitutes very impertinent interference on the part of Mr. Hume; and His Majesty is persuaded that Lord Althorp could not have been aware of, or have recollected, the exact nature of the address when he spoke to His Majesty on the 25th.

His Majesty orders me to say, that he had not sanctioned a compliance with the address, and certainly would not have sanctioned such, if his pleasure had been taken; and that he is very desirous that the returns should even now be withheld, upon the ground of his refusing to sanction their being made, if this can be done, without embarrassment to his Government.

Upon this point, however, His Majesty will readily subscribe to the opinion and advice of your Lordship and Lord Althorp, and in the meantime he has desired the Lord Steward not to send the returns in until further communication. With regard to the future, His Majesty is extremely anxious that his rooted dislike of such interference on the part of the House of Commons should be borne in mind.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 371.

Earl Grey to the King.

Downing Street, March 5, 1832.

Earl Grey presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and has the honour of acknowledging your Majesty's gracious letter of yesterday.

Your Majesty may be assured that Earl Grey and his colleagues fully participate in the anxiety which your Majesty feels with respect to the West Indies.

The state of those colonies has been already under their most serious consideration, and instructions have been agreed upon, which Viscount Goderich will submit to your Majesty, if he has not done so already. He is now detained at Putney by indisposition, and on his return Earl Grey will lose no time in calling his attention, together with that of the rest of your Majesty's servants, to the very important and urgent subject of your Majesty's letter.

In the meantime Earl Grey has directed Lord Howick to draw up a short statement, which he takes the liberty of enclosing, in the hope that it may throw some light on the causes which have led to the late unfortunate occurrences in Jamaica.

All which, &c. GREY.

No. 372.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, March 5, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I have received both your letters of yesterday, together with that of His Majesty, to which I send a separate answer.

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I lost no time in making the necessary inquiries respecting the papers moved for by Mr. Hume, and have seen Lord Althorp, Lord Duncannon, and Mr. Ellice upon them. They appear to have been moved for late at night, and after the business of the House was over, and granted perhaps with too little consideration. I have desired therefore that, in future, all notices of motions of this nature should be required to be given to the Treasury a day before they are moved. It is only just, and His Majesty has a right, to call on his Government to resist any inquiries into the disposal of the revenues belonging to the Civil List as it is now arranged. There is only one case, that of its becoming necessary to apply to Parliament for assistance, in consequence of an exceeding in any of the departments of the Royal Household, in which such an inquiry could be proposed with any semblance of propriety. In the present case, no accounts connected with the Lord Steward's, or any other department of the Household, ought to be or will be produced. Those, however, which come under the Board of Works; or the Woods and Forests, whose expenses are annually voted, and which have been usually produced when called for, cannot be withheld. In the return to the motions therefore, of which I enclose a copy, this distinction will be made. All accounts in the Lord Steward's department will be withheld, and those only given which belong to the Public Boards, and which have usually been submitted to Parliament. The last resolution relates to accounts moved for last year by Mr. Mills. I do not know that there would have been any material objection to it, but it cannot now be remedied.

Mr. Ellice informed me that he had, some time ago, desired Sir H. Wheatley to send any accounts to be presented to Parliament respecting the Household under a private cover to him, that they might be carefully examined, with a view to any objection which there might be to their being produced, before presenting them. This, with the precaution of having time to consider any motions intended to be made, before they are acceded to, will I trust obviate, in future, any interference on the part of the House of Commons of which His Majesty might have just cause to complain; and he might be assured that, as far as I am concerned, and I can speak with the same confidence for Lord Althorp, all such proceedings, if they cannot be stopped, will be decidedly opposed.

I enclose a letter from the leading counsel employed in conducting the Crown prosecutions at Ennis to the Irish Attorney-General, which has been sent to me by Lord Anglesey, which appears to me to be very satisfactory, and which, I think, His Majesty will be glad to see. I have more fear for the result of the trials at Kilkenny; but if the juries there do their duty with equal resolution, I shall have great hopes of the restoration of at least comparative tranquillity in Ireland.

Mr. Rice has just been here, and has brought me the enclosed memorandum respecting these motions. I find I was mistaken in supposing that the third had been moved by Mr. Mills, it appearing that this also was Mr. Hume's.

* * * * *

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 373.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, March 6, 1832.

My dear Lord,—The King has ordered me to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's letter of yesterday in reply to his on the subject of the West Indian Colonies and the Slave question, and to assure you that it is perfectly satisfactory. You will observe from His Majesty's minute upon Lord Howick's paper, how much the King is pleased with it, and that he desires to have a copy of it; which, however, may be made at leisure, as His Majesty listened with great attention to the reading of every part of the paper. He observed that its publication, or at least its circulation, among those chiefly interested in the question, might do good; and that he thought it might be well to conclude it with some contrast of the effects produced in St. Lucia and in Jamaica by the conduct respectively pursued.

His Majesty also read, with much satisfaction, Mr. Bennett's letter to the Attorney-General of Ireland respecting the judicial proceedings in the county of

Clare, which contains the most encouraging account from Ireland which he has seen for some time past.

Lastly, His Majesty has ordered me to express to your Lordship, how much he has been gratified, and how much his mind has been relieved, by your communication on the subject of the returns called for by Mr. Hume; and the assurance of your determination, and that of Lord Althorp, to resist the further attempts of that individual, or of the House of Commons, to interfere with the Civil List and Household arrangements, except in the case of its becoming necessary to apply to Parliament for assistance, in consequence of an exceeding in the departments of the Royal Household, which His Majesty will take good care shall not occur. Your Lordship is aware, from previous correspondence, how much these attempts at undue interference have been the source and the subject of annoyance to His Majesty; and you may, therefore, judge of the satisfaction he derives from your communication, which is the most conclusive he has yet received on the subject.

The King is quite aware that his objection cannot take effect as to the Board of Works, or the Woods and Forests; but he orders me to observe, that the disposal and occupation of apartments in royal palaces are under the Lord Chamberlain's departments, and the royal gardens under that of the Lord Steward.

His Majesty is perfectly satisfied with the line your Lordship has prescribed, that in future all notices of motions of this nature shall be required to be given to the Treasury a day before they are moved, and that all accounts in the Lord Steward's department shall be withheld, and those only given, which belong to the Public Boards; and which have been usually submitted to Parliament.

I believe that Mr. Ellice's communication to Sir Henry Wheatley was understood to apply to the Duchies' accounts, as he has no concern with the Household departments; and those lately called for have been made out by Sir William Fremantle, and will now be sent in. His Majesty was sensible that Mr. Spring Rice had no other course to pursue than to write the letter to the Lord Steward in conformity to the order of the House of Commons; nor was it to that letter His Majesty objected, but to the interference of the House of Commons with the Civil List and its details, which had not been called for or warranted by any application to Parliament for assistance.

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I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 374.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, March 7, 1832.

My dear Sir,—Your letter of yesterday has given me infinite pleasure, first, from the approbation expressed by His Majesty of the paper drawn up, at a very short notice, and with very little time, by Lord Howick, which I have returned to him, to have a copy made for His Majesty, which I hope to receive in time to send with this. His Majesty will, at the same time, receive a letter from Lord Goderich, who, I am sorry to say, is still confined by a feverish indisposition, with the proclamation and dispatch which have been sent to Jamaica upon the late events in that island.

In the second place it gave me great pleasure to learn, that what I had said respecting the accounts called for by Mr. Hume had proved satisfactory to His Majesty. I trust that in future there will be no mistakes on matters of this nature: the line is so clear that with the accounts of His Majesty's Household, which belong to the Civil List, the House of Commons have no right to interfere. It is only for returns from the public offices, whose expenditure comes annually before Parliament, that they have a right to call. If any part of the expenses of the royal gardens, or of the palaces, are thus defrayed, they will be considered as matters of public account; but this will apply to such expenses only. I certainly think, if proper attention had been paid to it at the time, the return of the inmates of the royal palaces, &c., might have been prevented; but having been moved for and presented so long ago, nothing can be now done upon that subject.

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I am, &c. GREY.

No. 375.

The King to Earl Grey.

Windsor Castle, March 9, 1832.

The King has received, with great satisfaction, Earl Grey's report of the debate in the House of Lords last night;* and His Majesty trusts that the course which it took and the result, may be considered not only conclusive as to the immediate question, but *generally* favourable to the Government. The King was not sorry to hear that the Archbishop of Canterbury had been roused by Lord Eldon's attack upon the Bench of Bishops.

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* On Irish Tithes.

WILLIAM R.

No. 376.

The King to Earl Grey.

Windsor Castle, March 11, 1832.

The King received yesterday afternoon Earl Grey's letter of the 9th, enclosing a list of the Peers present on that evening in the House of Lords, of the speakers in the debate, and the numbers of the division.* His Majesty is concerned to find that there was not a better attendance of Peers who support the Government, and that so many Bishops voted against it. It is his intention, when he goes to London, to see the Archbishop of York, and to speak to him seriously respecting the course which the Bishops are pursuing.

WILLIAM R.

No. 377.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, March 12, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I have to acknowledge the letter which His Majesty was pleased to send in answer to my account of the debate and division on Lord Strangford's motion. Not having anything material to say to His Majesty, I do not trouble him with a letter for this purpose.

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* On Lord Strangford's motion for a Select Committee on the Glove Trade. The numbers were—for the motion, 33; against it, 41.

We had a long discussion yesterday in the Cabinet on the subject of the Reform Bill. After much consideration it has been resolved, unless some great change in our prospects should take place, not to propose to His Majesty to create Peers before the second reading in the House of Lords. I think we may be nearly confident of success in that stage of the proceeding. But our majority is neither so clear, nor the assurances on which we presume we shall have one, so entirely to be relied on, as one could wish. The risk of failure is a fearful one, and I wish there was no other danger than that of the overthrow of the present Administration to be apprehended from it. The Duke of Wellington and his friends are very active in their canvass, and, I am told, very confident.

I am very glad that the King intends to speak to the Archbishop of York on the conduct of the Bishops. No exertion, indeed, should be omitted to avert the incalculable mischief of a second rejection of the Bill by the House of Lords. Have you had any conversation with Lord Hill? The accounts from Kilkenny are lamentable. I have letters from Lord Anglesey, but as all the information which they contain is more fully detailed in those which have been sent by Mr. Stanley, I do not trouble His Majesty with them. What is to be done in a country where the juries will not do their duty under the law? This is an evil which cannot be cured by new laws, as these must equally be enforced, and can only be enforced by means of juries.

I have just received a notice from Lord Aberdeen, of his intention to ask to-day for an explanation of what has taken place at Ancona.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 378.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, March 13, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have had the honour to submit your Lordship's letter of yesterday to the King, but was unable to reply to it by the messenger, as he went earlier on account of the Queen's letters for the foreign post.

His Majesty was glad to learn that you had, upon full consideration, determined, unless some great change should take place in your present prospects, not to propose to him to create Peers before the second reading in the House of Lords; and His Majesty still hopes that the prospects may become brighter in Committee, and that you may not be placed under the necessity of resorting to this dreaded measure, though His Majesty is as anxious as you can be to escape a second rejection of the Bill in the House of Lords.

His Majesty has appointed the Archbishop of York on Friday at twelve, and means to speak to him earnestly. He will speak to Lord Hill also. I had forgotten to mention to your Lordship, that I had a good deal of communication with him on the day we left town, and that I flattered myself I had made some impression, but I have not heard from him since.

The King enters fully into the serious view you take of the accounts from Kilkenny, and of the lamentable state of a country in which such utter disregard for all principle is shown by those who are called upon to discharge the most important and the most conscientious duty under the law. On the other hand, as there has been no breach of the peace on this occasion, there is no plea for the substitution of martial law in this refractory district.

His Majesty fully expected that Lord Aberdeen would make a piece of work about the Ancona business; but the recent communications from Paris, Turin, &c., would offer the grounds of a satisfactory answer to his attack.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 379.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, March 16, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I took the earliest opportunity after I arrived here to read to the King the copy of your Lordship's letter of the 11th inst. to Lord Althorp, which you sent to me yesterday afternoon;*

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* There is no letter from my father respecting the communication of this letter to Sir H. Taylor: it was therefore probably sent to him after a conversation my father must have had with him when he came to London with the King, who seems to have gone there on the 14th for the levee, and to have staid till the 16th.

and I am directed by His Majesty to thank you for the communication of this interesting and important document, and to express to you how sensibly His Majesty feels the candour and the confidence, which have prompted you to make it to him, and to put him in possession of sentiments so unreservedly declared, upon a subject which has so long engaged your anxious atttention, and upon the various considerations connected with it, or which have arisen out of its introduction and discussion; but more particularly upon the serious and critical question of an extensive addition to the House of Lords, with a view to the final success of the Reform Bill.

The King was very much struck by the honourable, the manly, and statesman-like feeling which every opinion conveyed, every word contained in this letter breathe; and he has observed with satisfaction, that the view which your Lordship takes of the point chiefly at issue accords so decidedly with that which had presented itself to him, as indeed he has not scrupled to state it in his occasional communications to you. Nor has His Majesty felt less satisfied with the handsome manner in which you have, in a letter addressed confidentially to a friend, of which the communication to himself could not have been contemplated, done justice to the course he has pursued. Of the sincerity of the assurance he has received from your Lordship and others of his confidential servants, that you gave him credit for 'the firm, unequivocal, and uncompromising support which he had given you throughout,' His Majesty had never entertained a doubt; but your letter to Lord Althorp contains a valuable record of much that has passed, more particularly on the subject of a creation of Peers; and His Majesty read with peculiar interest that passage in which, after reminding Lord Althorp that such a measure had not been in your contemplation at the beginning of your proceedings on the measure of Reform, to proceed to say that, 'even after the rejection of the first Bill by the House of Lords, he cannot have forgotten that when the King, in graciously expressing his desire that you and your colleagues should not resign, stated his conviction that no Minister would be found to propose, nor any Sovereign to consent, to a very large creation of Peers for the purpose of carrying a new Bill, you unanimously acquiesced in that opinion; that things in their progress since had forced upon your consideration what was originally thought impossible; that you have been brought gradually to contemplate what once appeared to be an unqualified evil, as an absolute necessity; and that the King, as these discussions proceeded, was brought at last, though most reluctantly, as was natural, to confide to you the power which you claimed to have reserved to you, to be exercised, however, only in the last extremity, and on certain conditions.' His Majesty was desirous that I should, in acknowledging the communication of the letter, particularly notice this passage as describing most forcibly and accurately what has passed upon the subject and his own share in it.

His Majesty was also much struck by the remark which occurs in your consideration of the question, as confirming your opinion for abstaining at present from the exercise of the power which the King has confided to you, as to what would be the 'certainty of success in creating fifty or even sixty Peers at the present moment,' namely, 'that it is a measure of violence for which there is no precedent in our history, the case of Queen Anne's Peers not being in point; that it is a certain evil; and, with all these objections, in your opinion very uncertain of success.'

His Majesty has, all along, seen the question in the same light; and he has contemplated with dread the further consequences by which the measure may possibly be attended; to which he has naturally applied the example recently afforded by France, namely, 'the possibility of the Government not having strength enough to go on without a further creation of Peers;' 'the House of Lords probably becoming unmanageable in your hands; and, if you should be displaced, the succeeding Government being under the necessity of making a further addition to it;' 'and then (as you further observe) what would become of the constitutional character and efficiency of this branch of the Legislature?' To which His Majesty would add the question, once before put by him, How would you reconcile the introduction of a considerable number of *nomination* Peers under the direct influence of the Government with the principle of the Reform Bill, of which the main feature is the abolition of nomination boroughs?

Every observation which your Lordship has made, the scruples which have made so strong an impression upon your mind, and which are so forcibly urged, are calculated to add to the security which His

Majesty feels in having placed his unlimited confidence in a Minister whose views are so decidedly influenced by the broad consideration of what is due to the country, to the state, and to the constitution; and who, in the prosecution of a favourite object, does not yield to any bias which may appear to him to be at variance with these patriotic feelings, still less to the clamour, which his hesitation to resort to the expedient he so deprecates has already raised. But, in proportion as His Majesty gives you credit for being guided by the most patriotic principles, it becomes him to consider what *he* also owes to the station in which Providence has placed him; and His Majesty may say with you, that, in this case, 'his feeling is stronger than his reason.'

His Majesty sincerely laments the difficulties in which your Lordship and his Government are placed in the progress of this question; and he directs me to assure you that you may rely upon his continued support; and to repeat that this support, and the power confided to you, are not limited to the stage of carrying the second reading, but extend to the general issue of the question, namely, to carrying the Bill itself with such modifications as may be introduced in Committee, and reasonably admitted, without destroying the principle and the efficiency of the measure.

It has occurred to the King that, in every reference to the majority of forty-one in the Lords on the last occasion, no notice is taken of the advantage which the Opposition derived from the superior number of proxies, and which they would lose by going into Committee; and yet His Majesty concludes this cannot have been overlooked in your calculations.

I have only to add that I have read this letter to the King, who has authorised me to say that it correctly conveys his sentiments.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

Letter from Earl Grey to Viscount Althorp referred to in the above.

(Private.) Downing Street, March 11, 1832.

My dear Althorp,—Before entering into the very important subject of your letter, I cannot deny myself the satisfaction of expressing my sincere and grateful feeling of the kindness and affection which marks it throughout.

It is most true that you accepted office at my earnest desire, as an indispensable condition of my doing so; that it was attended with a great sacrifice of your personal comforts, not greater however than that which I made of my own; that everything that has passed since has confirmed and increased the confidence and good opinion with which you had before inspired me, into an affectionate friendship which it is gratifying to me to think is equally felt by you, and which nothing, I trust, will ever diminish or impair.

When we took office we thought that a Reform of Parliament could no longer be postponed. I had declared that opinion recently in the House of Lords. Acting upon it I proposed it as a condition on which the Administration was to be formed, to the King, and he was graciously pleased to assent to it.

The next step was to consider what the nature and extent of the proposed Reform should be; and, after carefully weighing the whole matter, we were unanimously of opinion, that if it was not a real and efficient Reform, it would fail in effecting the object we had in view, viz. the satisfaction and tranquillity of the public. The plan which has since been proposed in the two Bills was the result, and to this also His Majesty gave his assent.

I forbear to follow it from its introduction into the House of Commons through all the difficulties which it has had to encounter, the contention to which it gave birth, the triumphant result of the appeal which was made upon it to public opinion by the dissolution of Parliament, and the unfortunate rejection of the first Bill on the motion for its being read a second time in the House of Lords. These things must be sufficiently impressed on our minds to make it unnecessary to do more than thus summarily to recapitulate them, with a view to their bearing on our present situation. From the beginning we were pledged to use our best efforts, and to exert all our power for the success of a measure which we deemed of vital importance to the best interests of the country. That obligation has been increased by the circumstances to which I have alluded, and by the almost unanimous support of a generous and confiding people. To the King we owe all that men can owe, for the firm, unequivocal, and uncompromising support which he has given us throughout.

We are bound then equally by a loyal regard for the King, by the duty which we owe to him and to the country, and by the consideration of our own honour, not to shrink from any measure which all these interests prescribe, under a firm conviction of its wisdom and necessity.

This then is the question which we have to decide. We are bound to carry the measure of Reform if possible; but this does not bind us to the adoption of any means that may be proposed for this purpose. We must, I repeat it, be first satisfied that these means are consistent with the public welfare, and, if in some degree doubtful and hazardous, imposed upon us by the necessity of the case. Is a large creation of Peers, in the present circumstances, justifiable upon these principles?

I am sure it cannot be necessary for me to remind you, how little such a measure was in our contemplation at the beginning of our proceedings on the measure of Reform. Even after the rejection of the first Bill by the House of Lords, you cannot have forgotten that when the King, in graciously expressing his desire that we should not resign, stated his conviction that no Ministers could be found to propose to any Sovereign to consent to a very large creation of Peers for the purpose of carrying a new Bill, we unanimously acquiesced in that opinion. Things in their progress since have forced upon our consideration what was originally thought impossible: we have been brought gradually to contemplate what once appeared to be an unqualified evil, as an absolute necessity; and the King, as these discussions proceeded, was brought at last, though most reluctantly as was natural, to confide to us the power which we claimed to have reserved to us, to be exercised, however, only in the last extremity and on certain conditions. The Bill has now passed the House of Commons, or may be considered as having passed; and as we must look to its being brought again to be decided by the House of Lords within three weeks, it is necessary for us, without further loss of time, to look to what that decision is likely to be, and to take our measures accordingly.

The questions then to be considered in this view, are these: What expectation have we of a favourable division in the House of Lords? If the second reading should be carried, what security have we that the Bill will not be mortally injured in the Committee? Whether, if such should be the result, we can then exercise the power which we now have for the purpose of remedying the evil? or whether it would be better, looking to such a result as would be fatal to the Bill in the Committee, as most probable, we should be justified in having recourse to a large creation of Peers at once to anticipate the mischief? There is also a further and most important question, Whether a large creation of Peers under such circumstances would not be itself exposed to the greatest danger of failing?

1. To the first of the questions my answer is that, according to the best information I can obtain, a majority on the second reading in the House of Lords appears to me to be nearly certain. So certain that, as far as that stage of the proceeding is concerned, I do not think we could justly state that the necessity, which we all admit to be the only justification of the measure we are discussing, now exists. You require some evidence of this in the public declarations of Peers who have privately assured us of their support

on this occasion. Such declarations they are prepared and willing to make; they even left the time to my choice; and, for the reasons of which you are aware, I thought the best opportunity would be, on the introduction of the Bill into the House of Lords. This justification of our abstaining from a measure which the public expect, will not therefore be wanting.

2. To the second question I cannot give so satisfactory an answer. Those who have promised to support the second reading do so avowedly with the intention of proposing in the Committee alterations which would lessen their general objections to the Bill. But, convinced that a large measure of Reform is necessary, they declare that they do not wish to defeat it by a subversion of its main principles. They are ready to acquiesce in Schedule A., in the enfranchisement of the large towns, and in the 10*l.* qualification, only passing such regulations as might secure it against abuse, and might be consistent with the intention of its proposers in making it a *bonâ fide* qualification. I am quite aware that, under colour of such a regulation, the qualification itself might be injuriously affected. But surely this is a fair subject for consideration; and we should hardly be justified in proceeding to a measure of extreme force, merely from the apprehension that such an effect might be produced. It might however be produced, and even minor alterations might be made, which, though it might be possible to submit to them separately, would in the aggregate amount to such a change in the general effect and character of the Bill, that it would no longer be the measure of efficiency to which we are

pledged. There is also the further danger attending this part of the question, of repeated defeats in the Committee at once increasing the impatience and discontent of the public, and in the same proportion injuring the character of the Government, and withdrawing the confidence by which it is now supported. I admit this to be a consideration of extreme doubt and difficulty. It is undoubtedly possible that we may find ourselves so embarrassed that it may not be in our power to retrieve the mischief which may have been done. But reserving the right of making Peers for this stage of the proceeding, if it should become necessary, we shall at least have proved our determination not to resort to it while any other chance remained; and the evidence of the necessity of the act would be so clear that it would carry with it its own justification. This would not be the case at present: we should now certainly be charged with having wantonly had recourse to a measure, which the assurances of support which we had received showed that we might have dispensed with. Besides, though there are dangers in the Committee, there are also chances in our favour. The strength of the Government, we have every reason to expect, will be compact and entire; that of our opponents, it is not improbable, will be divided; and, upon a fair balance of all these considerations, my opinion is, that we ought to stand as we are, at least for the second reading. The third and fourth questions are anticipated in the answer which I have thus given to the second, and it is unnecessary to dwell further upon them.

If in considering these questions my opinion is decided for abstaining at present from exercising the power which the King has so generously confided to us, that opinion is confirmed by the last and most important consideration of what would be the certainty of success in creating fifty or even sixty Peers at the present moment.

Here I confess my extreme repugnance to the measure makes me distrust my own judgment. I apply my reason to it with all the care I can, but I am conscious my feeling is stronger than my reason. It is a measure of extreme violence; there is no precedent for it in our history, the case of Queen Anne's Peers not being in point; it is a certain evil, dangerous itself as a precedent; and, with all these objections, in my opinion very uncertain of success.

The majority against us was forty-one; the conversions, from which we now look for a more favourable result on the second reading, would turn against us almost to a man; many of those on whom we now depend would, I believe, certainly leave us; and there is no saying how far a defection, to which the natural feeling of the House of Lords would tend, might be carried. We should be exposed then to a great risk of failure even on the second reading. Would our difficulties be much diminished even in the Committee, when the whole body of the Opposition would be brought together, their mutual discontents composed, and their hostility to the Government increased and inflamed with additional rancour and acrimony? I really believe, therefore, that we should fail. But in such a failure you say, our characters would be safe. I doubt it. We should be exposed to attacks of another kind, in which that part of the community, which must be regarded as the soundest and the best, would too probably join. Even the most violent who have no affection for us, and whose object it is to vilify all public men, and to wean public opinion from the settled institutions of the Government, would cry out against us as they do now, for want of vigour and energy in not having made enough. But our personal characters are not the only consideration. This is too clear to have escaped the attention of a person actuated by your just and honourable motives; and indeed it is admitted by you. What then would be the effect on the country? Would the indignation directed against the House of Lords be less after a creation of Peers, in the event of another failure, than before it? Would not all the dangers which we now apprehend be equally incurred? and can you believe that our characters would save us in the general wreck which would ensue? My belief is, the danger of a general combination against the Government would not be less, and that its consequences would be worse; and, after all, suppose we should succeed for a time, would the Government have strength enough to go on without a further creation of Peers? What has happened in France, allowing for all the dissimilarity between the two countries, may afford an example of what we might expect. The House of Lords would probably become unmanageable in our hands; and, if we should be displaced, the succeeding Government would be under the necessity of making a further addition to it; and then what would become of the constitutional character and efficiency of this branch of the Legislature? The result then is, that all these considerations press upon my mind with so irresistible a weight, that I really cannot bring myself to the adoption of a measure to which, as we now stand, there appear to me to be such insurmountable objections. I never had, I believe, at any time an overweaning confidence in my own opinions. I am accused indeed, sometimes, of giving way too much to those of others. I do not wish to defend myself against this charge. I am not ashamed of abandoning an opinion when I am satisfied it is wrong. In the present case, what can be a stronger proof of the sincerity of my conviction, than that it holds out against the opinions of the Chancellor, yourself, and Holland, and many persons whom I not only esteem and love for their personal qualities, but, who, I am convinced, have the strongest feelings of regard and attachment to me individually. It is painful to differ from such persons, but our conviction is not dependent on our will.

With regard to the question which you put to me, I will take example by your frankness in answering it. As at present advised, I do not think anything would induce me to be a consenting party to a large creation of Peers. The consequence of your resignation then would be, the immediate breaking up of the Government; for, if I refused to come in, I should now find it still more impossible to go on, without you.

I have written this as fast as I could after reading your letter. More time would have enabled me to state better all I feel on this subject, and even to bring forward much that I am sensible I have omitted; but I was anxious, as soon as possible, to convey to you the impression which your letter has made on me, for the kindness of which I must once more offer you my heartfelt thanks.

Believe me, &c. GREY.

I should like to have this letter back again at your leisure, that I may have a copy taken of it.

A sad account from Kilkenny; the first trial has ended in an acquittal against the clearest and most positive evidence.

No. 380.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, March 16, 1832.

My dear Lord,—Your Lordship will observe, from the letter enclosed, that I availed myself of the discretion confided to me in so flattering a manner, to submit to the King the copy of your letter to Lord Althorp; but I showed that only, nor did I take any notice whatever of my having seen the others, which I return. They are indeed immaterial as compared with yours.

I fear I have faintly described the impression made upon the King by your letter, nor how much he has been gratified by the sentiments it expresses, or by your confidential communication of them. I hope that what I have written by His Majesty's command will prove satisfactory to you, both with reference to the course you have pursued, and to the assurance it conveys of continued support, and the latitude given with respect to the exercise of the power confided to you.

The letter respecting Lord Hill must unfortunately prove less satisfactory; but it occurred to His Majesty that, if your Lordship should think fit to take further advantage of the view which has been in general taken of the situation of Commander-in-Chief as not being a *political* one, and to extend your forbearance to allowing Lord Hill to pursue his own unrestricted course upon this question, it would be satisfactory and due to you to have it in your power to show that His Majesty had made up his mind to accept of Lord Hill's resignation, if you should consider it expedient that he should do so. I shall at any rate have a copy of my letter to you ready to send to Lord Hill, but its communication would probably produce his immediate resignation.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

P. S.—His Majesty has been much pleased with the result of the Duke of Wellington's motion yesterday evening.*

No. 381.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, March 17, 1832.

My dear Lord,—The King has honoured me with his commands to acquaint your Lordship that, after you had left him the day before yesterday, he saw Lord Hill, and endeavoured to impress upon him the importance which His Majesty attached to his voting for the second reading of the Reform Bill; and it is with very great concern that His Majesty admits that he could not prevail upon him to acquiesce in his wish, and that Lord Hill pleaded his known feelings and sentiments as being adverse to the measure, and the necessity of consistency, as motives which must preclude him from giving any other than a negative support to this measure, namely, by absenting himself from the discussion and the division, although ready and willing otherwise to give a general support to the Government, as he has hitherto done.

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* A motion for papers respecting Belgium, which was withdrawn after an explanation had been given by my father, which was considered satisfactory by the Duke of Wellington.

The King cannot conceal from your Lordship, that he has felt mortified and disappointed by this result of his communication with Lord Hill, as he is perfectly sensible of the importance of securing the direct vote, upon this occasion, of a Peer holding the high and important office which his Lordship fills, and of the difficulty and embarrassment under which the Government must be placed by his continued hostility (for hostility the King, adverting to his official situation, feels it must be called), and by the impression it is calculated to produce, and the clamour it must raise.

Your Lordship is well aware of the great personal regard which the King feels for Lord Hill, of the estimation in which he holds his character, and of the importance which he attaches to his continuance in a situation for which he is so well qualified, and which he fills with so much credit to himself, so much advantage to the service and the country, and so much to His Majesty's satisfaction. You are aware of the confidence which His Majesty places in Lord Hill's integrity and impartiality; and that His Majesty believes him to enjoy, in the same degree, the good opinion and confidence of the Army. His Majesty is sensible also that you share these sentiments; that you have sought to give to Lord Hill every possible proof of your cordial and friendly feeling towards him; and that Lord Hill has taken every opportunity of expressing his sense of your conciliatory proceedings and those of your colleagues, with whom the duties of his office bring him into communication, and of the facilities which he hence experiences in the discharge of his duties.

Under these circumstances the King cannot doubt that you would lament, as he would, on every account, the occurrence of such a state of things as should place His Majesty under the necessity of accepting a resignation which he does not deny that he understood Lord Hill he was prepared to tender, though he avoided noticing the expression of such readiness.

His Majesty had flattered himself that Lord Hill would not, any more than many others who are guided by a view of the *actual* state of things, have deemed himself precluded, by the desire of adopting a consistent course, from supporting the Government upon this occasion; and that he would have been influenced by the same feeling which has been shown by others (not similarly circumstanced from official situation) to take a course which might tend to relieve His Majesty from embarrassment, and from the necessity of resorting to an alternative which he deprecates; and His Majesty orders me again to repeat that he has been mortified and disappointed by the result of his communication with Lord Hill.

His Majesty, considering it due to Lord Hill that he should be apprised of his feelings on this occasion, will send him a copy of this letter if you should see no objection.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 382.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, March 18, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I received yesterday evening your three letters of the 16th. It is impossible for me to give any adequate expression to the feelings of satisfaction and gratitude with which His Majesty's gracious and marked approbation of my letter to Lord Althorp has inspired me. I was indeed anxious that His Majesty should see, in the simplest and clearest form, that of a confidential letter, a statement of my views and opinions, as well as of my feelings, on the very difficult and embarrassing questions which have lately occupied the attention of his Government. The result has been even more gratifying to me than I had a right to expect. The unreserved confidence placed in me by His Majesty must be at once my reward and my support; and it will continue to be, as it always has been, my constant and anxious endeavour to deserve it.

I certainly had hoped and expected a more favourable result from His Majesty's communication with Lord Hill. There is, you may well believe, a good deal of jealousy and uneasiness felt by the friends of the Government at so important an office being in the hands of a person who is so intimately connected with the chief members of the Opposition, and particularly with its leader; and whose political opinions are known not to be congenial with those of the Administration. These feelings, it is too probable, will be increased by Lord Hill's absenting himself from a division of so critical a nature, both to the existence of the Ministry and the interests of the country, more especially when it is seen that many persons, whose opinions were at least as strong as those of Lord Hill, feel it now incumbent upon them to take a different line from considerations of public duty. But sensible as I must naturally be to all these circumstances, I still feel so much personal regard for Lord Hill, so strong an opinion of the advantage of his services, and still more so great an unwillingness to press upon His Majesty any thing that might be unpleasant to his feelings, that I cannot hesitate in expressing my wish that nothing further should be done upon this subject. I am sensible, as I ought to be, of His Majesty's goodness in offering to communicate to Lord Hill a copy of your letter to me, and there certainly could be on my part no objection to such a communication. It would, on the contrary, be a most flattering testimony of His Majesty's confidence. But it might perhaps give pain to Lord Hill himself, and possibly produce a tender of his resignation; and it must rest with His Majesty whether, taking this consideration into view, he would still wish it to be done.

If the Reform question is happily got over, there will arise no further unpleasant consequence with respect to Lord Hill's not having given it his support; but if it should fail, it may furnish additional matter of complaint. But this is of so little importance compared with the other consequences of defeat, that it does not give me much uneasiness.

I rely with confidence on Lord Hill's general support, when this question is disposed of. Our communications with respect to matters of service have always been of the most comfortable nature; but I cannot help expressing a wish, that the higher rewards of the profession, such as governments, regiments, and ribands, should not be disposed of without a previous communication with me. This, I believe, has been the case with all former Ministers. Nothing can be further from my intention than any improper interference, and I am sure that no inconvenience can arise from this being in future the understanding between us. I have, perhaps, been led to make this observation by information which I have just received of a probable vacancy in the government of Londonderry. I have reason to believe that it would be an object of local importance to Sir J. Byng; and where there are such strong claims of service united with his political attachment to the Government, I hope this may be considered as one of the cases in which the wishes of the Administration ought to prevail.

I intended to have written to His Majesty yesterday an account of what passed on the Duke of Wellington's motion, but a great pressure of business, together with some indisposition, prevented me. I am afraid it will do harm, both from the manner in which the discussion has been reported, and from the comments made upon it in the 'Times,' which is the paper to which the attention of foreigners is chiefly directed. I really believe that M. Perrier's statement of what had passed respecting Belgium was not meant to apply to this country; and it cannot be denied that the French Government had represented to the other Powers the impossibility of France remaining indifferent to the occupation of Belgium, or any part of it, by a Foreign Power. The object, therefore, of what the French Government said cannot be doubted; and we ought not to be too ready to take offence at the national disposition to a little boasting on such an occasion. I glossed the matter over in this way as well as I could, admitting however, as I was bound to do, the accuracy of the statements of the Duke of Wellington with respect to that part of the negotiation in which he was concerned. But the mere speech of a Minister, whatever reason we may have to believe in its authenticity, is surely not a good ground for a Parliamentary proceeding. This practice of commenting in one House of Parliament on what has passed in another, is not very convenient; but how much worse will it be if the discussions on different sides of the Channel are to be taken up as matter of observation in the different legislative assemblies.

In this case I have no doubt that what has passed here will furnish matter of attack to the French Opposition. Then comes the defence: contrary statements to be commented upon again here, and thus engaging us in a most prejudicial circle of assertion and contradiction, of complaint and recrimination. I wish, therefore, that we could confine ourselves to the old wholesome practice of noticing only official documents and public papers.

I enclose the best list and calculations I can at present make on the probable voting in the House of Lords. I think they establish nearly the certainty of a majority in our favour, but I get very nervous as the time approaches.

Do you know anything of Lord ——? Is there any hope of his staying away? That is the most I can expect.

The advantage we shall have from proxies not being admissible in the Committee had not escaped me.

I am afraid the case of the Princess Louisa is almost without hope, but, as you do not mention her, I conclude there has not been any material change.

I feel very sincerely for the anxiety and distress which this must occasion to the Queen.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 383.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, March 19, 1832.

My dear Lord,—It has not been in my power to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's letter of yesterday by return of post, although I did not delay to submit it and the accompanying lists to the King.

His Majesty rejoices that his sentiments upon your letter to Lord Althorp have been expressed in a manner which proved satisfactory to your feelings, as he was anxious that justice should be done to his sense of the honourable principle and the candour which have marked your proceeding; and that you should feel assured of the value which he attaches to the motives by which you are guided, and to the confidence with which you have disclosed your sentiments to him.

The King orders me to say that he enters fully into all your feelings with regard to Lord Hill; that he is sensible of the difficulty and embarrassment under which he places you, and may still place you, by the line he takes respecting the Reform Bill; and that he therefore gives you the more credit for the kind expression of your wish, that nothing further should be done on this subject. His Majesty will, in consequence, not make to him the proposed communication of his letter to your Lordship, observing only that, in any case, it will remain as a record of your forbearance, and as a proof that His Majesty's partiality for Lord Hill would not have stood in the way of this demonstration of his support, had you not declined it. But whether Lord Hill should or should not hereafter be apprised of this circumstance, it is impossible, in the King's opinion, that he should not feel the delicacy of your conduct towards him, and the propriety of giving his general support to your Government when this question is disposed of.

His Majesty has no hesitation in subscribing to your Lordship's opinion that there should be an occasional communication between the Commander-in-Chief and the head of the Government on the subject of the disposal of the higher rewards of the profession; and he has understood that such did take place on the part of the Duke of York, although he considered himself, as Commander-in-Chief, exclusively responsible to the Sovereign for the appointments of this description, and for the recommendation of the claims which were submitted for consideration. His Majesty has before stated to you, and now repeats, that he does not believe the Duke of York to have submitted the name of any officer for the Grand Cross of the Bath without having previously consulted the Secretary of State for the the Colonial Department, who, of course, communicated with the head of the Government; indeed, in some instances, the King's pleasure was taken by Lord Bathurst. With regard to governments (I mean those classed under the head of 'Garrisons' in the United Kingdoms), his late Royal Highness was not in the habit of consulting the Minister, except in the instances when contingencies of a local or political nature, or a possible combination of civil duties, seemed to point out the necessity and propriety of concurrence; as, for instance, Edinburgh Castle, Jersey and Guernsey, Windsor Castle and the Tower (the latter however is not, I believe, in the recommendation of the Commander-in-Chief), and I should imagine Londonderry to be of the same description as there are, if I am not mistaken,—civil or magisterial duties connected with the military authority. In the recommendation of regiments, His Royal Highness did not consult the Minister except under some peculiar circumstances; but there was always an unreserved communication, and a disposition to meet the wishes of the Government, provided they did not operate against a fair consideration of the claims of the service. I think I am warranted in saying, that His Royal Highness would not have taken the King's pleasure as to the disposal of the regiments of Life Guards and Foot Guards without some previous communication with the Ministers, and especially the former, to which the Gold Stick attached. Indeed, *formerly*, his communications with the Secretary-of-State and Secretary-at-War were in certain cases independent of the Commander-in-Chief; and I remember when Lord Harrington died, that the Duke of Wellington was extremely annoyed at his late Majesty's disposal of the 1st regiment of Life Guards, and of the situation of Constable of Windsor Castle, without his having been previously consulted, although he did not object to the selection made by His Majesty.

* * * * *

The King feels the full force of every remark which your Lordship makes upon the Duke of Wellington's motion in consequence of Mons. Casimir Perrier's speech, and its mischievous tendency, which His Majesty had, indeed, noticed to me as soon as he read the paper, observing that he feared it must embarrass and compromise M. Perrier, and occasion irritation, which might be prejudicial to the interests of this country, by disturbing the harmony and the friendly disposition, upon the maintenance of which so much depends at this period.

His Majesty readily admits, also, that great inconvenience and embarrassment would result from introducing the discussions on the different sides of the Channel, as matters of observation and debate in the different legislative assemblies.

His Majesty considers the lists of Peers you have sent him as being generally satisfactory, but the question is, as you observe, a very anxious one.

I fear there would be no use in my endeavouring to influence Lord ——, as, although he has upon no occasion expressed hostility to the Government upon the general principle, nor anything like a factious spirit, his determination to oppose the Reform Bill in all its stages has been declared without reserve. For some time past, indeed, he appears to have studiously kept aloof, and to have avoided all communication upon public questions. I believe his political intercourse to be chiefly with Sir Robert Peel. I observe the Bishop of Rochester's name in the list of those who are expected to vote *against*, and yet I thought I had understood some time ago that he meant not to vote.

The King expressed himself very sensible of the interest your Lordship takes in the case of poor Princess Louisa, whose situation continues, I fear, very precarious although there has been some amendment since yesterday evening. The Queen hardly leaves her room, and has not stirred out since she came from London.

To add to her distress, Her Majesty has received very unfavourable accounts of the health of her mother the Duchess of Meiningen.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 384.

Earl Grey to the King.

Downing Street, March 26, 1832.

Earl Grey presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and thinking that your Majesty may wish to be informed of what has passed this evening in the House of Lords, ventures to trouble your Majesty with this communication.

Lord Harrowby, after the first reading of the

Reform Bill had been passed, and a question moved by Earl Grey, for appointing the second reading on Thursday the 5th of April, made his expected declaration. Founding his intention on this occasion to vote for the second reading, on the changes that had been made in the Bill, and the unchanged state of public opinion, he expressed however, rather in stronger terms than Earl Grey expected, his hostility to the Bill as a whole, and his determination to oppose it on the third reading, if important alterations were not adopted in the Committee.

A pause ensued, when Earl Grey got up, and upon his stating that it was his anxious wish to have heard any other Peers who might wish on this occasion to give their opinions to the House, Lord Wharncliffe rose and adopted the same course as the Earl of Harrowby, only stating more strongly his opinion of the necessity of a large Reform, and also his determination to resist the Bill if not materially amended. The Bishop of London followed, who in a much more satisfactory manner than either of the other Noble Lords, expressed his intention of voting for the second reading; and though he might wish for some alterations, that it was by no means his intention to propose such as would materially impair the measure, or prevent its affording satisfaction to the country.

After the Bishop, the Earl of Carnarvon, with a slight reflection on the insufficient grounds offered by the Earl of Harrowby for his change of conduct, shortly expressed his determination to adhere to the line he had before taken, and to oppose the principle of a measure which he condemned in all its parts.

Nobody else rising Earl Grey followed. He stated his satisfaction upon the whole at what had passed, at the support to be given by Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe, and more especially by the Bishop of London, to the principle of the Bill on the second reading, accompanied with some regret at the extent of the alterations which the two former Lords appeared to meditate in the Committee, and their intention, if they were not adopted, of opposing the Bill on the third reading. He also stated, that though pledged to maintain the principle and efficiency of the measure, he never intended, as had been most erroneously stated in the discussions on the former Bill, to oppose all alterations whatever in Committee; that there might be such as he should consider as directly striking at its principle, and therefore altogether inadmissible; others of subordinate importance, to which it might be impossible for him to accede, but which certainly were entitled to a fair consideration and discussion; others again to which, if directed with a *bonâ fide* intention of improving the Bill, he should be inclined to listen, not only with the attention which was due to the parties from whom they came, but with the most favourable disposition.

Upon the whole he congratulated the House on the appearance which now presented itself of a disposition to sanction the principle of Reform by a vote in favour of the second reading; and expressed his anxious hope that we were now in a fair way to the settlement of the question, which had been kept too long in a state of uncertainty and suspense.

The discussion concluded by a short speech from the Duke of Wellington, objecting to the course taken by Lord Harrowby, and declaring his intention to oppose the second reading; but afterwards, if that stage should be passed, to give his best assistance to improve, which in other words means to destroy, the Bill in the Committee.

Upon the whole Earl Grey considers what has passed as quite decisive of the success of the second reading, but he is obliged to add that it forebodes a more united and more formidable opposition in the Committee than he expected.

All which, &c. GREY.

No. 385.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, March 26, 1832.

My dear Sir,—I have written the enclosed letter in great haste, that the King might get it to-night, and must beg you to ask him to excuse the inaccuracies and erasures which have taken place in consequence. Not having either the means or time to take a copy of it, will you have the goodness to return it to me for that purpose.

I should consider what passed to-night as more satisfactory, if it were not that some rather strong expressions of Lord Harrowby, and some rather imprudent ones from Lord Wharncliffe, may, it is to be feared, give occasion to unpleasant and mischievous reflections.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 386.

The King to Earl Grey.

Windsor Castle, March 26, 1832. 11 P. M.

The King is very sensible of Earl Grey's attention in making so immediate a communication to him of what passed this evening in the House of Lords, upon the introduction of the Reform Bill, aware as he must be of the interest with which His Majesty would look forward to it.

His Majesty owns that he had not felt free from apprehension, that an attempt would be made to oppose the Bill on the first reading, and that, in this respect, the course of the debate has agreeably disappointed him; while, on the other hand, the qualification with which Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe expressed their determination to support the second reading, as stated by Earl Grey, is not stronger than His Majesty had been led to expect. At any rate, he rejoices that Earl Grey considers what has passed as decisive of the success of the second reading; and he rejoices also that the Bishop of London has so early expressed his sentiments in a spirit which cannot fail to produce considerable effect upon many of those who are hesitating as to the line they shall take. It appears very evident, as indeed His Majesty had always suspected, that considerable doubt and uncertainty, not to say divisions of opinion, prevail among those who have been, or may as yet continue, hostile to the Bill; and His Majesty cannot but build his hope upon this circumstance as calculated greatly to favour Earl

Grey's success in the Committee. His Majesty is persuaded that nothing can tend more effectually to insure that success, than a perseverance in the course which Earl Grey has adopted in this first stage of the proceeding, which appears to His Majesty to have been distinguished by that good judgment and temper which are so essential towards carrying him through the arduous task he has undertaken; and which will, His Majesty trusts, enable him to defeat the attempts of a jarring and disjointed Opposition.

William R.

No. 387.

Minute of Cabinet held at the Foreign Office.

March 27, 1832.

PRESENT:

The Lord Chancellor,	The Viscount Goderich,
The Lord President,	The Viscount Althorp,
The Duke of Richmond,	The Lord Holland,
The Earl Grey,	Sir James Graham,
The Viscount Palmerston,	The Right Hon. E. S. Stanley,
The Viscount Melbourne,	The Right Hon. C. Grant.

Your Majesty's confidential servants having taken into their most anxious consideration the state of the question now before the House of Lords, respecting a Reform in the Representation, feel it to be their duty to bring under your Majesty's view, the circumstances which appear more especially to call for immediate attention.

The results to be contemplated on the proposal for a second reading of the Bill now before the House are, 1st. Its being carried by a satisfactory majority.

2nd. By only a small majority, which would afford little hope of its successful progress through the ulterior stages.

3rd. The absolute rejection of the measure.

1. In the first of these suppositions it seems clear that your Majesty's Ministers would be bound to go on to the Committee without proposing to your Majesty any addition to the House of Lords.

2. The second raises a question of greater difficulty, which, perhaps, cannot be satisfactorily decided before the event.

Much must, therefore, depend on the nature of the debate, and the character of the division; but, *primâ facie*, it would appear that a very small majority, which would be likely to fail in the Committee, would render a creation of Peers necessary to ensure the progress of the Bill through the remaining stages.

3. But the most important consideration, and the one requiring immediate decision, is that which attaches itself to the third supposed case, viz. the rejection of the Bill on the second reading.

From the best estimate that can be formed of the present state of parties in the House of Lords, and the numbers that may be expected to vote in the approaching division, your Majesty's servants have every reason to believe, that an event so dangerous to the peace and security of the country is very unlikely to occur. But improbable as this result may appear, it is one of such serious consequence as renders it the indispensable duty of your Majesty's Ministers to be previously prepared for it.

In this event only two courses appear to be possible:

1st. That your Majesty's servants should offer to your Majesty their immediate resignation of the offices which your Majesty was pleased so graciously to bestow upon them, and in their discharge of the duties of which they must ever entertain, with sentiments of the sincerest gratitude and devotion to your Majesty's person and service, the most lively recollection of your Majesty's constant and generous support.

2. Or secondly, that immediate steps should be taken for the re-introduction of the Reform Bill, accompanied by such measures as would be required to insure its success.

1. In the first of these alternatives they could not feel, without the deepest pain, that they might appear to be abandoning your Majesty's service in a moment of great difficulty and danger. Such, however, they trust your Majesty is assured could never be their disposition. No motives personal to themselves, no considerations of their own interests or safety, could induce them to deliberate on such a proposition; nor could they entertain it even for a moment, unless it should be proved to them that your Majesty's personal ease, and the interests of your Majesty's service, required them to pursue that course.

The second alternative, therefore, viz. that of providing for the re-introduction of the Bill, accompanied with such measures as might appear best calculated to insure its success, is that to which, in the present circumstances, they find themselves compelled to look; and to which it appears necessary that your Majesty's attention should now be directed.

In the event of a rejection of the present Bill, another of the same import could not, consistently with the forms of Parliament, be introduced during the present session; nor, if introduced, could there exist any hope of carrying it without a considerable addition to the strength of your Majesty's Government in the House of Lords. It would be necessary, therefore, immediately to prorogue Parliament for a few days, and at the same time to make such an addition to the House of Lords as would afford a certainty of success in the progress of the measure.

That inconveniences and difficulties may be found to occur in this mode of proceeding, your Majesty's servants will not attempt to conceal; but it appears to them the only course, if your Majesty should be graciously pleased to wish them to continue in their present situations, which could enable them to act usefully in your Majesty's service, and to provide effectually for the continuance of peace and good order in the country.

They have deemed it, therefore, to be their duty, respectfully to submit this their humble opinion to your Majesty, that your Majesty may have time to consider the expediency of adopting, in the case supposed, the measures they have suggested; the more especially, as if the emergency should, contrary to their expectation, arise, it would be necessary that they should advise your Majesty to act upon them without delay.

All which is humbly submitted to your Majesty's indulgent consideration.

No. 388.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, March 29, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I trouble your Lordship with this letter merely to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th inst.,* and to say that I submitted it to the King before he went to London yesterday. He had not expected to receive the Minute of Cabinet before he saw you; and it is probable that his answer will be sent to-morrow afternoon; but he told me this morning that he wished to give full consideration to the subject.

I have, &c. H. Taylor.

No. 389.

The King to Earl Grey.

Windsor Castle, March 30, 1832.

The King has given to the Minute of Cabinet, dated on the 27th inst., which Earl Grey put into his hands on the following day at St. James's Palace, the serious consideration which the importance of the questions therein submitted to his attention called for; and it is his anxious desire to convey his sentiments thereon to Earl Grey, and to his other confidential servants, in such terms as shall satisfy them that His Majesty has not mistaken the nature of their appeal to him, nor lost sight of the obligations under which he is placed at this critical period, of stating without reserve the view he takes of the various contingencies under which he is called upon to decide upon the advice they may tender to him.

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* Missing.

The King does not disguise from himself the difficulties in which his Government may be placed by the state of the question now before the House of Lords: he gives them full credit for the fair and manly manner in which they have represented them in the Minute of Cabinet; and although his Majesty entertains a hope that the result to be contemplated on the second reading of the Reform Bill may assume the more favourable shape, he is quite alive to the necessity of being prepared for the less satisfactory contingency.

His Majesty readily admits that, in the first of the suppositions stated in the Minute of Cabinet, that 'of the Bill being carried by a satisfactory majority (which satisfactory majority, as he understood from Earl Grey, was calculated at from twelve to eighteen), his Ministers would be bound to go to the Committee without proposing to him an addition to the House of Lords.'

His Majesty admits also that the second supposition, that 'of the Bill being carried by only a small majority, which would afford little hope of its successful progress through the ulterior stages' — 'raises a question of greater difficulty, which cannot, perhaps, be satisfactorily decided before the event; and that much must depend on the nature of the debate, and the character of the division.'

But His Majesty, at the same time that he admits this, cannot conceal from his confidential servants his apprehension that, in such case, the difficulty may become more serious, and its results prove more uncertain than they may be disposed to anticipate.

If the second reading should be carried 'by a very small majority which would be likely to fail in the Committee, whereby a creation of Peers would be rendered necessary to insure the progress of the Bill through the remaining stages,' it must be obvious that the Opposition would have proved such as could not be defeated by any moderate addition of Peers, inasmuch as the support given by Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe, and their friends, would have been unavailing towards averting that measure which would, as they have declared, throw them again into the ranks of the Opposition, with the greater part of the Bishops who may take the same contingent line, and as to these again would be to be added some Peers (and His Majesty fears they would not prove few) who have hitherto supported the Bill, but who are averse to the violent measure of creating Peers for the purpose of carrying it; all this may either render necessary an addition to the House of Lords so extensive as His Majesty's confidential servants may not venture to recommend, nor His Majesty think fit to sanction; or may render eventually insufficient and useless the addition, which, upon any reasonable ground, and defensible principle, His Majesty may be advised and consent to make.

His Majesty has stated his reasons for considering the second case as offering difficulties of a most serious character, such as would render it the most embarrassing of any, and he therefore sincerely hopes that it may not occur.

The last consideration, namely, the possible *rejection* of the Bill on the second reading, is certainly the most important; and as it is stated to require immediate decision, and as he admits the necessity of being prepared for it, His Majesty will deal with it as a case that has already occurred, although he does not hesitate to express his firm conviction, that the Bill will go to Committee.

The King is sensible that, in the event of the rejection of the Bill on the second reading, only two courses are possible, namely, 'that his actual Ministers should resign their offices, or that immediate steps should be taken for the re-introduction of the Reform Bill, accompanied by such measures as might appear best calculated to insure its success;' and His Majesty rejoices to learn from their Minute that they are not disposed to entertain the first, 'unless it could be proved to them that His Majesty's personal ease and the good of his service required them to pursue that course.'

The King assures them that, in his feeling and opinion, neither his personal ease, nor the good of the service, would be promoted by their resignation, or by a change of Administration. His sentiments upon this subject have been fully stated upon former occasions; and he trusts that the honesty of their expression has been amply proved to them and to the country.

Earl Grey and his colleagues *accepted* office at a very critical period, and their conduct, under the continuance of almost unparalleled difficulty of various nature, has experienced, as it has merited, His Majesty's confidence and support. It is not in his disposition lightly to withdraw either; and he has not ceased to hold the opinion, more than once expressed, that the interests of this country, and the peace of Europe, which mainly depends upon the consistent policy of this country, would be seriously compromised by frequent changes of men and measures.

This, therefore, is a risk which it is His Majesty's bounden duty not to incur, so long as he can possibly avoid it. But he must rely upon the moderation and upon the discretion of those who constitute the Administration, not to place him in a position in which the alternative shall cease to be a matter of option.

Earl Grey and his colleagues must be sensible that this question of Reform is that which has been the chief source of embarrassment since their acceptance of office; the only one, in fact, which has ever raised any difficulty which might not be overcome by an able and energetic discharge of duty such as His Majesty has experienced from them; the only one which has placed their existence as an Administration at stake; that which has, in great measure, absorbed the attention of the country, paralysed its faculties and energies, and which still exercises a most prejudicial influence upon its powers of action and the application of its resources.

It is not His Majesty's intention, by this observation, to reflect upon the introduction of the measure, or upon the course which has been pursued during its progress. He believes the first to have been, under all circumstances, unavoidable; he will admit the second to have become so.

But it must be allowed that a very erróneous estimate had been formed of the opposition it might experience; and if, after two failures, after a discussion so often renewed and so extended, after so long a continuance of agitation and irritation, the Bill should be again rejected in the House of Lords, it must become the duty of His Majesty's Ministers to consider, as it is the King's duty to require of them to consider, not only what measures shall appear best calculated to insure the success of the Bill, but also what measures shall be best calculated to reconcile the feelings and opinions of those who are opposed to the measure, and to prevent the continued agitation, the discomfort, and the serious injury to the country in every respect, which must arise from the renewal of a protracted discussion; and, although His Majesty has pledged himself to sanction an addition to the House of Lords, although that pledge shall be sacred, although his Ministers shall have that resource in reserve, to be applied, however, as had been stipulated, subject to His Majesty's consideration of the nature and extent of the addition, His Majesty cannot view that as being the resource best calculated to insure the success of the measure; and he is sensible that Earl Grey and others of his confidential servants will agree in opinion with him, that it is by no means a desirable expedient, nor one which should be resorted to without extreme hesitation: nay, the King fears, for the reasons assigned with reference to the second supposed case, that this expedient might, after all, prove insufficient, and disappoint their expectations.

But, at any rate, the addition to the strength of the House of Lords cannot prevent the recurrence of one of the most serious evils. The whole question will be re-opened, and the Bill must be re-introduced in the House of Commons, where its discussion may be protracted as on the two former occasions, and may again absorb the whole season.

If there be any foundation for these remarks, if they be deserving of attention, His Majesty conceives that they should point out the necessity of considering well, before another new Bill is introduced, whether it may not become the duty of those who frame it to communicate freely with the more moderate of those who have opposed the present Bill, and to endeavour to secure their assent to such a degree as may facilitate its progress, and greatly abridge the discussion.

The King has always considered the main principle of the Bill to rest on Schedule A. He believes it to embrace more than many of the most ardent advocates of Reform had contemplated before the construction of this Bill; and he conceives that if this and the additions to the Scotch and Irish representation were the basis assumed by the Government to have been established, other parts of the Bill might become the subject of communication and arrangement between the parties before the Bill should be re-introduced.

This is a suggestion which His Majesty has felt it to be his duty to throw out, upon the same principle on which he urged every possible modification, and every endeavour to conciliate and reconcile the opponents to the measure when it was re-introduced, after its first failure, and after the dissolution of Parliament.

His Majesty is sensible that the suggestion may not accord with the views and sentiments of those whose opinions are wedded to the Bill in its present shape; but he cannot help considering the general interests of the country as being of superior importance to the maintenance of certain provisions of the Reform Bill, upon which opinions are greatly divided; and that the restoration of peace and tranquillity, of confidence and security, of comfort and good will, and a cessation of irritation and disunion in society, are objects of which the attainment would well reward the endeavours of those concerned in framing a new Bill, to divest it of all that may appear to them, from past experience, calculated to produce a fresh and possibly another useless struggle. WILLIAM R.

No. 390.

Minute of Conversation with the King.

[This Minute was submitted to the King, and the remarks made by His Majesty were written in the margin by Sir H. Taylor (see following letter). The Minute is in my father's handwriting.]

Windsor Castle, April 1, 1832.

His Majesty honoured me with a long conversation this morning, in consequence of the Cabinet Minute which had been addressed to His Majesty on March 27th, and His Majesty's answer thereto.

He began by stating the deep anxiety he felt upon this subject, and his desire to hear from me, without further delay, the observations which I had given His Majesty reason to expect I should have to submit to him on the subject of His Majesty's answer to the Cabinet Minute.

Thus called upon I stated to His Majesty the grateful sense with which those of his Ministers who were in town had received the renewed expression of His Majesty's confidence and approbation, but that there were some points in His Majesty's answer which had also produced considerable anxiety in their view of it.

That they had thought it their duty humbly to submit to him the various contingencies in which they might be called upon to act, and on which it was necessary for them to be prepared to act at once and without hesitation.

That, the first, viz. the Bill being carried by a satisfactory majority, left little for consideration at this moment; that it must then go to the Committee, where both its main principles and its subordinate details would be to be considered.

That with respect to the first, I could only repeat what I had frequently submitted to His Majesty, that there were certain provisions of the Bill which I must consider as fundamental, viz. Schedule A., the enfranchisement of the great towns, and the 10*l.* franchise.

With respect to the first (Schedule A.) His Majesty said, and frequently repeated during the conversation, that being satisfied that a Reform is now necessary, he considered Schedule A., with the exception, perhaps, of one or two particular boroughs (and His Majesty particularly specified Amersham[1]) as essential indeed, that he now considered it as a matter of state necessity; and on my observing upon this that His Majesty would therefore consider his Government as being placed in the same situation by the rejection of Schedule A. as they would be by a negative of the second reading, His Majesty at once assented to this view of the case.[2] The enfranchisement of the great towns, His Majesty considered as the necessary consequence of the disfranchisement of the boroughs in Schedule A.; and on

[1] His Majesty observed and meant Amersham only.

[2] Completely.

the 10*l.* franchise His Majesty said he would not give an opinion on a question which he imperfectly understood, but that he had been informed that the chief objection to this extension of the elective franchise arose from its operation in the metropolitan districts.[1]

The second point to be considered was, the necessity of a creation of Peers, if the Bill should be carried by a small majority only, on the second reading. I stated to His Majesty the obvious inducements to such a measure, but that, perhaps, this question might be left open to future consideration, by our acquiescing in the proposition which we have reason to expect will be made, for postponing the Committee. This interval might give him time to consider to what extent the creation should be carried, if His Majesty did not object to it. His Majesty stated that he did not mean to say that he would not consent to it, but seemed to wish that it should be reserved for consideration in the way that I had stated.[2]

The third and last, but most material, point, viz. the rejection of the Bill on the second reading, came then to be considered. I stated to His Majesty my sanguine hope that an event, which I must consider as so calamitous, would not happen: but that if it did, the consequences which I contemplated were of so serious a nature, that, as was stated in the Cabinet Minute, it was absolutely necessary to be prepared for them: That, after much anxious consideration, His Majesty's Ministers were convinced that only one of two courses remained, as had already been pointed out to His Majesty, viz. either the immediate resignation of His Majest 's present servants, or the prompt and

[1] Precisely.

[2] Correct.

decisive adoption of the measures which had been submitted to His Majesty's consideration: That the first would be a most painful alternative to persons who had received so many marks of favour and confidence from His Majesty; and that, if compelled to resort to it, it would be their first wish to render it as little embarrassing to His Majesty as possible; but that there was no other alternative but that of proroguing Parliament and creating Peers: That this must be done, if His Majesty should be pleased to assent to it, so immediately, that the country should receive, at the same time with the news of the rejection of the Bill, evidence of the determination to carry through a measure on which the hopes of the public were so intently fixed, by the only means which would then be left for the attainment of that object: That I did not conceal the difficulties which would attend this course; that of having to renew the measure, subject to another long struggle in Parliament, was amongst the first of these; but that, in a choice of evils, we must take the least; and that this might be lessened by introducing the Bill in the House of Lords, and after having been enabled to carry it by an addition of Peers, we might hope to encounter less difficulty than had obstructed the former discussions in the House of Commons: That by such means the effect of the disappointment which was to be apprehended, might, it was to be hoped, be obviated; but that there appeared to be no other chance: That the irritation of the public mind would be very great; that it would be directed against me personally, more than against any other member of the

Government; that, if the public saw any negotiation going on, such as His Majesty had suggested, for altering the provisions of the Bill, so as to make it more acceptable to the moderate opposers of Reform, this irritation would be still more excited; that the public impatience would neither wait for such a negotiation, nor accept from the present Ministers, and probably not from any other, what would bear the character of a mutilated measure; and that I could not, without entirely disqualifying myself from acting usefully for His Majesty's service, propose anything which would be so entirely at variance with all the declarations which I had made on this subject: That I was afraid the evil would not stop here; and that, if there should be any delay in taking the measures which appeared to be necessary, to obviate the effects of the general disappointment, the consequence would be, that instead of waiting with a disposition to accept a modified plan of Reform, there would be a renewed cry for Universal Suffrage and the vote by Ballot, which had ceased since the present measure was proposed. I, therefore, repeated that there seemed to be no alternative but that which had been submitted to His Majesty.

His Majesty listened to all this with the kindest attention. He stated that he felt all the difficulties of the situation in which the Government was placed, and of his own; that what he had suggested (and he wished it to be considered as a suggestion, and not as a negative on the proposition of the Cabinet) was to facilitate matters, and assist in the maintenance of the present Administration, which His Majesty was pleased more than once to say it was his anxious wish should remain. His Majesty further asked if it might not be possible to go through the remainder of the Session, and defer the introduction of a new Bill till the next, which would afford a favourable interval for considering carefully both what should be done and the best way of doing it. These suggestions His Majesty stated were made with the view of removing, as much as possible, both the difficulties of the Government and his own; but he did not decide positively on the adoption or rejection of the course of proceeding which had been submitted to him; and expressed his satisfaction that the interval of another week before the second reading would afford opportunity for further consideration.[1]

[1] All correct.

His Majesty then asked what number of Peers would, in my opinion, be required, if he were brought to consent to a further creation. I answered that I should be deceiving His Majesty if I stated that I thought a less number than fifty or sixty would be sufficient to insure success. This, he said, was a fearful number, and how was it to be made up; that he must have information before him to enable him to make up his mind, both as to the number of new creations, and the persons of whom that number was to be composed. I answered that, undoubtedly, this was a matter which must be brought fully under His Majesty's consideration, before His Majesty could be expected to decide.[2]

[2] Correct.

His Majesty then asked, Whether it was intended to send any answer to his letter? I stated that it was in contemplation to do so, but that it was deferred till the whole Cabinet could be assembled. He then desired that the matter should remain on this footing for the present, till he should receive the answer of the Cabinet, and should see me again on Wednesday, when His Majesty proposes being in town for the levée.[1]

The result then is, that there is no positive rejection, on the part of His Majesty, of the advice tendered to him by his servants, and that the matter still remains open for His Majesty's decision.[2]

This, I think, is the substance and the result of what passed on this interesting occasion, and the conversation was marked throughout by the graciousness and kindness of His Majesty's manner, and by repeated expressions of the confidence which he places in his present Ministers.

In the course of it I stated my views of the present state of the House of Lords, which had given to a party in it, which had possessed the Government for the last seventy years, a power which enabled them to resist the united wishes of the House of Commons and the people: that this made a large creation of Peers, the general objections to which were forcibly stated by His Majesty, and the strength of which I acknowledged, bear a very different character from that which would have belonged to it under different circumstances; and that this was so strongly felt as to induce many reasonable men to urge the necessity of an addition to the House of Lords, to counteract the predominance of this party, independently of the present question.[3]

There was also some discussion as to the probable

[1] Correct.

[2] Certainly.

[3] Perfectly correctly stated.

majority, and the Peers, and particularly the Bishops, who are now likely to vote for the second reading. But I have not adverted to these more particularly as not being of such immediate importance to the chief and very interesting object of this conversation.

No. 391.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, April 2, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have just finished reading to the King the Minute your Lordship sent me this morning of what passed in your conversation with His Majesty yesterday, and I now return it.

The King listened and considered it with great attention, and has authorised me to say that it is impossible for any statement to be more accurate, or to convey more correctly what passed on both sides. I have put down in pencil on the margin the short remarks made by the King on certain passages as I read the paper.

His Majesty will be obliged to your Lordship to send him a copy of this Minute whenever it can be conveniently made.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

His Majesty will see you shortly.

No. 392.

Minute of Cabinet.

Downing Street, April 3, 1832.

At a meeting of your Majesty's servants, held this evening at the house of the First Lord of the Treasury,

PRESENT:

The Lord Chancellor,	The Viscount Goderich,
The Lord President,	The Viscount Althorp,
The Duke of Richmond,	The Lord Holland,
The Earl Grey,	The Lord J. Russell,
The Viscount Melbourne,	The Right Hon. E. Stanley,
The Viscount Palmerston,	The Right Hon. C. Grant,

Sir James Graham,

the following Minute was unanimously agreed upon:—

Your Majesty's confidential servants have read with the deepest interest your Majesty's most gracious answer to the Cabinet Minute of the 27th ult., and also the Memorandum of the Conversation with which your Majesty was pleased to honour Earl Grey on Sunday last at Windsor Castle.

While they dutifully repeat their sincere acknowledgments of the kindness and the confidence on this as on so many former occasions shown towards them by your Majesty, they feel it to be due to your Majesty, that they should entreat your Majesty's attention to some particulars in the present position of the Government, and the general state of public affairs, which afford matter for the most anxious reflection.

It cannot be doubted that the various interests of the country have suffered, and must continue exposed to great embarrassment, while the question of Reform remains unsettled; and the general and intense anxiety with which the public await the decision of the House of Lords on the Bill now before them, affords too much reason for alarm at the consequences which might ensue from its rejection.

Such a state of things, which has chiefly prevailed since the failure of the former Bill in October, 1831, your Majesty's servants cannot deny to have been productive of much public inconvenience and difficulty; but they at the same time derive very great consolation from the reflection, that the Bill, far from having produced it, has in fact had the effect of repressing a much worse and more dangerous spirit than even the opponents of the present measure have ascribed to it, while the bulk of the respectable classes have warmly favoured it.

A salutary check has been given to those wild notions of Reform which had previously been so widely disseminated, and of which the Unions that sprung up in 1830 were only one consequence among many.

The agitation proceeding from these causes has now happily subsided, and the people of all ranks are generally disposed to adopt and even to cherish a plan which will certainly return to Parliament persons chosen in a different manner, but equally interested in preserving those institutions, and protecting those rights of property on which the stability of the Government depends. Your Majesty's servants cannot entertain the hope that, in the event of the Bill being lost, things would remain in their present state. They fear, on the contrary, that the probable and immediate effect of so unfortunate an occurrence would be a revival of all those feelings which are now dormant, and even a call, from those who have not hitherto joined in it, for those extensive and dangerous changes which it has been the object of your Majesty's Ministers to avert.

The more your Majesty's servants have reflected upon this subject, the more strongly do they become impressed with the conviction, that any modifications of the measure can only be hoped for in the Committee.

Were the second reading lost, it would show the number of Peers who would agree to any compromise to be extremely small, that a majority indeed of the House were determined to resist the whole measure, and any change calculated to conciliate the opponents of the Bill would be the object of general suspicion and distrust, especially at the moment of its rejection, when your Majesty's Ministers would be exposed to the reproach of having neglected to recommend the only means by which the success of the Bill could have been insured. Your Majesty's servants, therefore, feel it to be their bounden duty to represent to your Majesty that, in order to prevent the disastrous effects of the shock on the internal peace and commercial credit of the country, which are to be apprehended from the failure of the Bill, no other course would be left, except that of taking immediate measures, which would announce, at the same time with the rejection of the Bill, the resolution to re-introduce it in the House of Lords in such a manner as to afford a satisfactory assurance of its success.

Your Majesty's servants have again taken into their most serious consideration the other and less improbable event which may happen, of the majority being so narrow as to leave little hope that the Bill, unimpaired as to its essential provisions, would pass the Committee.

Your Majesty's Ministers, referring to what was stated in their former Minute, and by Lord Grey in his conversation with your Majesty, humbly request that this matter may be left open for such advice as, upon a more perfect knowledge of all the circumstances connected with it, they may be enabled to tender to your Majesty, trusting that your Majesty will in the meantime give a favourable consideration to the opinion already submitted by them, that, in the event now under contemplation, a creation of Peers proportioned to the exigency of the case may be required.

They feel confident that your Majesty will justly appreciate their motives in thus explicitly stating the course which, with a view to events possible, but not, as they hope, at all probable, they may be compelled by a sense of duty humbly to recommend.

They feel that a most serious responsibility rests upon them in the position they now occupy, because the internal peace of the country and the stability of its foreign relations may depend upon the result of the approaching discussion; and because, through their repugnance to advise an increase of the Peerage until it should be admitted on all hands to be unavoidable, they have exposed themselves to the charge of not recommending those measures which might have placed the success of the Bill, and all that depends upon it, beyond the reach of accident.

They trust that the event will justify their having encountered this hazard, but they would be without excuse were they to leave a contrary result unprovided for. Under this conviction they find themselves compelled, humbly and dutifully, to urge the necessity of being prepared to carry into immediate execution, if the Bill should be lost, the measures which have already been submitted to your Majesty; and which in that case could, as they believe, alone avert the dangers which would threaten the best interests of your Majesty's subjects and the security of the existing institutions of this country.

No. 393.

The King to Earl Grey.

Windsor Castle, April 5, 1832.

The King feels so deeply the importance of the matter submitted for his consideration and decision in the Minute of Cabinet, dated on the 3rd inst., which he received from Earl Grey yesterday, that His Majesty cannot but sincerely regret that the pressure of circumstances and the urgency of the questions at issue should have allowed him so little time for deliberation. He is, however, anxious to relieve his confidential servants from any uncertainty and suspense as to the view he takes of these questions, and he admits them to have been so much the subject of previous discussion and reflection, as not to have found him unprepared for this communication of their sentiments and wishes.

Before the King enters into any point contained in this Minute of Cabinet, he considers it desirable to refer to the correspondence and communications which have passed on the subjects of which it treats, but more especially to such as have reference to the proposal of creating Peers, for the purpose of carrying the Reform Bill. He does so at the risk of extending this letter to great length and of much repetition; but he does so in order to establish, by such reference, that his sentiments and language have been consistent, and that the hesitation which *he feels and shows, to commit himself to the extent which is now required from him*, is not produced by any new view of the question, but by a strict adherence to the principle which he has not ceased to profess and to maintain.

The King had invariably expressed his apprehensions of a collision between the two Houses of Parliament, in consequence of the introduction of an extensive measure of Reform. He stated in his letter of February 4, 1831, to Earl Grey, 'that it was natural he should dread, independently of other sources of objection, the introduction into the House of Commons of such measures of Reform as would be likely to be rejected in the House of Lords, whence must arise a quarrel betwen the two branches of the Legislature, not upon a mere matter of form, not upon the enactment of a common law, but upon a matter affecting a main feature of the constitution of the country, upon a great popular question, and therefore to be viewed as a great national and political calamity.'

This apprehension was again strongly expressed at various periods during the progress of the measure, and His Majesty had frequently stated his anticipation of opposition in the House of Lords, more powerful, more violent, more persevering, than appeared to be contemplated by his Government, as well as his apprehensions of the difficulties which have arisen. His Majesty had not, when he first urged these considerations, contemplated the *possibility* of his being eventually called upon to relieve his Government from them by a large creation of Peers. He does not believe the idea of resorting to so violent and (adverting to its extent and to the circumstances under which proposed) so unprecedented an expedient had occurred to his confidential servants; and it is almost unnecessary to say that, when the suggestion grew out of the course of events, His Majesty's aversion to it was expressed in no less a degree than was manifested Earl Grey's reluctance to bring this measure into agitation.

The King believes this feeling in both to have continued undiminished, though it has yielded to the necessity of the case, to the consideration of the state of affairs which has unfortunately imposed this sacrifice of feeling, and to the desire which duty prescribed of endeavouring to avert more serious evils.

The question of creating Peers was formally brought forward by Earl Grey in a personal communication to the King at Brighton on the 4th of January last, when he stated that, from all the data he had been able to obtain, a difference of twenty votes had left in the House of Lords a majority of twenty-one votes against the Bill; but that, even if it should be carried on the second reading, the opposition in Committee might prove destructive of the Bill. It would, therefore, be necessary to prevent the loss of the Bill, in either case, by the use of the means which the prerogative of the Crown afforded. It is unnecessary to repeat the arguments used by Earl Grey on that occasion, in support of this representation, as they have not varied since. He admitted the evil, and the objections to a creation of Peers, but considered the alternative necessary for the safety of the country. He stated that much difference of opinion had prevailed among his colleagues on the subject, but that they had finally agreed to authorise him to submit the matter for His Majesty's consideration, on the ground of making a partial addition to the House of Lords, and a further addition afterwards if necessary.

His Majesty at once objected to any measure affecting the *permanent* character of the House of Lords. Earl Grey stated his wish to limit it as far as possible, and mentioned besides Lord Francis Osborne and Mr. Dundas (to whom the King did not object, as they stood on distinct grounds), the eldest sons of Peers, eight or ten at first in all; next, collateral heirs to Peerages, where no direct heirs were likely to succeed; and that, 'in this manner, any permanent addition to the Peerage of any consequence might be avoided.' The King objected to creations of Commoners, but stated he should not object, thirdly, to Scotch and Irish Peers, so that the whole Peerage of the United Kingdom should not be augmented. He further desired that the advice of his confidential servants might be submitted to him in *writing*.

His Majesty having received Earl Grey's Minute of this conversation with him, wrote to him on the following day, the 5th of January. After admitting the possibility of the considerations which might be submitted to him appearing sufficient to justify his consenting to an addition to the House of Lords, for the purpose of giving to his Government such a preponderance of influence and votes as should enable it to carry the Reform Bill, His Majesty proceeded to say, that 'he could not lose sight of the objections he entertained to this measure, so far as not to feel it his duty to cause his assent to rest upon a principle which shall, as far as possible, maintain the respectability of the House of Lords, as it is now constituted, as shall preserve to the Peerage of this country the hereditary distinctions which it has not yet ceased to enjoy, and shall secure the character and independence of this high and important branch of the State, from any permanent consequence of an act resorted to with a view to a present emergency.'

'His Majesty, therefore, must establish as a condition *inseparable* from the possibility of his assenting to the proposal which may be submitted to him by his Cabinet, that, with the exception solely of Lord Francis Osborne and Mr. Dundas, to whose elevation to the Peerage he had already consented, and which had indeed, as shown by Earl Grey, been merely suspended, and possibly of Sir John Leach, which would stand on distinct grounds, although taking place upon this occasion, the addition to be made to the House of Lords, whatever may be the number, shall be effected *exclusively* by calling up eldest sons, or collateral heirs to Peerages where no direct heirs are likely to succeed.'

His Majesty objected to a *second edition* of additional Peers in consequence of the insufficiency of the first, and therefore considered if twenty-one were deemed necessary, they had better be added at once *in the manner proposed.*

Owing to the absence of the Lord Chancellor, the Minute of Cabinet communicating a final opinion was not dated until the 13th of January. It is stated in substance, that, supposing the necessity admitted for such exercise of the prerogative, the mode, the time, and the extent of its application were the next considerations. The extent should be adequate to the necessity of securing the object in view, and any augmentation of the numbers of the House of Lords, with the avowed intention of influencing the decision, would be unadvisable, unless His Majesty were prepared to carry it to the full extent, which the certain attainment of its object may eventually require. His Majesty's confidential servants expressed their agreement with His Majesty, as to the propriety of avoiding, as much as possible, any permanent addition to the Peerage. They admitted the soundness of His Majesty's opinion, that the addition required should be made at once, but could not, in the then uncertain state of their information, take upon themselves to say, whether the addition of any given number of Peers would be sufficient. They therefore suggested the postponement of any new creations till they should have more accurate means of judging to what extent they should be carried, trusting however that, when the time shall come, His Majesty will allow them the power of acting at once up to the whole exigency of the case. The Minute concludes with stating, 'that the expediency of making an addition to the Peerage upon the principles which had been stated, must depend upon His Majesty being prepared to allow his servants the power of carrying it to the full extent which may be necessary to secure the success of the Bill, with which view it could not then be limited to any precise number.'

Secondly, 'that, if His Majesty should be prepared for this consequence, the contemplated addition should be deferred till it may appear certain that, without such an addition, the strength of His Majesty's Government would be insufficient to bring to a successful issue the great measure on which they believed the peace and safety of the country essentially to depend.'

The King in his reply, dated 15th January, after adverting to what had passed, proceeded to observe that 'when he entered into this question, and showed the extent to which he might be considered prepared to concede, he did so upon the presumption (which, however, he admitted not to have rested on any assurance given to him) that the utmost number would not exceed twenty-one, or at least not much exceed twenty-one; and that he was then required to exercise his prerogative with a limitation and not to an undefined extent; and it was impossible he should not feel that there is a wide difference between that previous understanding and the case now submitted for his decision.'

After some further remarks upon the extent and nature of such a concession, His Majesty continued, 'that he would not, after having allowed that the resource should be effectual, and having indeed insisted upon the absurdity of incurring any risk by an insufficient addition to the House of Lords, if resorted to at all, deny to his Ministers the power of acting at once up to the full exigency of the case, it being understood that the contemplated addition should be deferred until it may appear certain that, without such addition, the strength of the Government would be insufficient to bring the measure of Parliamentary Reform to a successful issue.

'But His Majesty could not give this pledge, nor consent to the surrender of the exercise of his prerogative, without attaching to it the positive and *irrevocable* condition, that the creation of new Peers shall, under no circumstances, exceed the three to which he had already agreed, namely, Lord Francis Osborne, Mr. Dundas, and Sir John Leach: that the other additions shall be made by calling up the eldest sons, or collateral heirs of Peerages where no direct heirs are likely to succeed, without reference to the objection which had been made of throwing open the representation of counties or boroughs, which, if suffered to prevail, would have the effect of excluding many of those whom His Majesty considered most eligible. That, if these sources should prove insufficient (which, however, His Majesty could hardly conceive possible), recourse might be had to the Scotch and Irish Peerage for promotion to the English Peerage on this occasion, but that the selection shall be made from the oldest and most distinguished houses, so as not to detract from the value of the translation.'

'In attaching these conditions to his assent, it was His Majesty's object to preserve the character and respectability of the Peerage of this country, and to relieve it from the pressure of a *permanent* evil.'

To this letter Earl Grey replied on the 16th January, that, 'in stating his expectation that there might be a difference of twenty in favour of the Government on the next division, he had apprised His Majesty that this expectation rested on no certain data, and did not extend to the Committee. The object then being by an addition to the House of Lords to secure the passing of the Bill, the necessary amount of such an addition could only be ascertained by more accurate information. "The number was necessarily left indefinite." An increased number must depend upon the strength of the Opposition in the House of Lords, over which His Majesty's Ministers could have no control; but still Ministers hoped it may not exceed, at least not greatly exceed, the number before mentioned to His Majesty.'

Earl Grey proceeded to state 'he was aware of His Majesty's objection to any creations except from the three classes, of eldest sons, collateral heirs of childless Peers, or Peers of Scotland or Ireland, but suggested an addition of Commoners of ancient families of great wealth, as preferable to the latter of the three classes. But this he merely submitted, and does not press.'

Earl Grey's letter of 16th January was adopted and confirmed by a short Minute of Cabinet of the 17th, on which day also His Majesty replied to it.

The King admitted the necessity of providing against a second failure of the Bill, which, under existing circumstances, was pregnant with great danger, and might drive Lord Grey to propose a measure which His Majesty knew him to have approached with reluctance. After a general statement of the grounds on which His

Majesty had subscribed to the advice of his confidential servants with respect to an augmentation of the Peerage, he allows that 'all that had recently passed had shown that the number to be added must depend upon the strength of the Opposition in the House of Lords; and that he is satisfied, from what Earl Grey had submitted, that it is impossible for his Ministers to state what the necessary number may be.' He adds that 'he will readily waive his idea of extending the selection to Scotch and Irish Peers, if the eldest sons and collateral heirs of English Peers shall afford a sufficient number; but he retains his decided objection to the *creation* of any other than Lord Francis Osborne and Mr. Dundas; and to this point, in consenting to such exercise of the prerogative, His Majesty had attached so much importance, that he trusted it would not be considered necessary to urge him to abandon it.'

In a letter, dated January 29, Earl Grey notices with pain His Majesty's increased apprehensions from the effects of the Reform Bill, and admits that he feels deeply all the difficulties with which it is now surrounded, from the persevering and irreconcilable opposition given to it in the House of Lords.

The King, in his answer of same date, reverts (as he had done in other letters) 'to former communications, proving his *early* and unceasing apprehension of the collision between the two Houses, which had produced the embarrassments and difficulties creating the necessity of admitting for consideration a measure to which His Majesty and Earl Grey were alike repugnant.' His Majesty had equally adverted, in successive communications, to the possibility of new disappointments; but His Majesty had, on no occasion, 'forgotten or receded from his pledge to support Earl Grey in the promotion of a measure to which he had allowed him to commit himself. He agrees in opinion with him, that there appears now no safe course but that of using every exertion to carry the measure. He adverts to the difficulties which the present state of the House of Commons presents to the conduct of public affairs, and expresses his apprehension that they will be increased, not diminished, by the results of the Reform Bill.'

There had been some communication with Lord Wharncliffe, and through him with others at Brighton, the purport of which was immediately imparted to Lord Grey. It was again renewed early in February, and became the subject of further correspondence with Earl Grey. Although His Majesty had not declared, he had taken no pains to withhold or conceal the knowledge of his having agreed to an addition to the House of Lords for the purpose of carrying the Bill, but it was generally understood 'that it would not be resorted to while there remained any hope of carrying the Bill without it.'

In the course of this correspondence the King directed the question to be put to Earl Grey with respect to the proposed creation of Peers, 'What security there was that this step, whether resorted to at presen or hereafter, or at any time, would have the effect for which it was intended?' 'The number of Peers to be added was at first estimated at twenty-one; it was afterwards stated that more might be required, but that it was impossible to fix any number, and His Majesty consented that it should be indefinite; yet there must be some limit, and it could not be supposed by those who *urge* the measure, that His Majesty would agree to exceed certain bounds. Should forty or fifty be required (and His Majesty trusts he shall never be called upon to consider of an addition to that extent), the King wished to know whether there be any security that such a number would suffice.'

In his reply to this letter Lord Grey stated, on the 13th February, 'that his repugnance to the proposed measure amounted to aversion; that he was fully sensible of the difficulty stated by His Majesty as to any calculation that could be previously made of the addition, which, under the circumstances contemplated, might be required; and had no hesitation in saying, that if Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe were to take a decided part with the Opposition, not less than the largest number stated (namely fifty) could be expected to make the thing safe.' That he was anxious to avert the necessity by every possible endeavour, and had made an appointment with Lord Harrowby for the following day.

His Majesty's answer of the 14th expresses his satisfaction at the proposed meeting with Lord Harrowby, and at the endeavour to bring matters to a point, as well as the hope he entertained of a result which might relieve him and his Government from the pressure of the present difficulty; 'but if this effort should unfortunately fail, the difficulty must be provided for, and Earl Grey would not find the King fail him in the hour of need, His Majesty being satisfied that every effort would have been made to avert the necessity of the dreaded alternative.'

The interview with Lord Harrowby being postponed to the 16th February, His Majesty caused Earl Grey to be informed on the 15th, that 'His Majesty desired it might be clearly understood, that he was far from wishing Earl Grey to place the question in a situation which shall render its issue uncertain, and that he considered that if those who profess a disposition to support the second reading should come to any understanding, which shall offer ground for giving up the option which Earl Grey had, to propose an addition to the House of Lords for the purpose of carrying the Bill, it must be clearly established that they are thereby pledged to carry the Bill subject to that understanding, and without introducing or supporting any alterations which shall be at variance with it. Unless Earl Grey shall receive assurances which afford full security to this extent, His Majesty cannot expect him to commit himself, or to risk uselessly the abandonment of an alternative which is at his option.'

The King added, that 'he had no objection to Earl Grey's stating to Lord Harrowby that such is his view of the rule on which Earl Grey would be justified to proceed, if he should think such communication calculated to forward the object of his interview.'

Earl Grey, on the 16th February, acknowledged this communication as having been very satisfactory, had read it to Lord Harrowby and Lord Wharncliffe, and did not doubt its good effect.

On the 18th February, Earl Grey was assured by order of the King, that 'His Majesty had not hesitated to place the resource at his disposal, nor had his proceedings disappointed his expectations; and His Majesty was satisfied that he would persevere to the utmost justifiable extent in his endeavours to effect the object in view without applying the dreaded alternative. But His Majesty had already stated, most unequivocally, that he did not expect or require him to run any risk, at least not such as it was natural he should deprecate, both as a public man, and from his conviction of the consequences which a second failure would bring upon the country.'

On the 12th March, Earl Grey informed the King that, after some discussion in the Cabinet, 'it had been agreed, unless some great change should take place in the present prospects in the House of Lords, not to propose to His Majesty to create Peers before the second reading of the Bill.'

Earl Grey was assured, in a letter written by His Majesty's command on the 16th of March, that 'he might rely on His Majesty's continued support, not limited to the stage of carrying the second reading, but extended to the general issue of the question, namely, to carrying the Bill itself with such modifications in Committee as might be reasonably admitted, without destroying the principle and the efficiency of the measure.'

The King considers it unnecessary to make any other than a general reference to the Minute of Cabinet of the 27th March, and to his answer of the 30th March, these being of such recent date, and distinctly brought under consideration in the Minute of Cabinet of the 3rd inst., which is more immediately the object of this communication. In giving so copious an abstract of the previous correspondence, it has been His Majesty's desire to show that the course he has pursued has been consistent; that he has uniformly adhered to the principle on which he has made a painful concession; and that, having made that concession, and agreed to an exercise of his prerogative to which he had strongly objected, he has not, at any time, shown any wish to depart from his pledge.

His Majesty has never disputed the opinions expressed by his confidential servants, that a second failure of the Reform Bill might be productive of great difficulty and embarrassment, and that it is most essential to use every effort to carry the measure; and His Majesty has shown by all his proceedings, that it has been his study to promote the success of the measure which he had allowed them to introduce, although he may at times have expressed his doubts of the extent of the beneficial results from it which they contemplated.

His Majesty, viewing the case as it now stands, on the eve of the second reading, agrees in opinion with his confidential servants, that any modifications of the measure can only be hoped for in Committee; and he must observe, that the steps of which he urged the adoption in his letter of the 30th ult. had reference, not to the present state of the case, but to the possible (though he trusts not probable) case of a rejection of the Bill on the second reading, and to its re-introduction *as a new Bill.*

It has been the object of the King to show, by reference to previous correspondence, that he has not, at any time, withheld from his confidential servants the option of availing themselves of the permission to propose an addition to the House of Lords whenever circumstances should appear to them to impose the necessity of so doing. He grants that he has strongly expressed his opinion and wish that the measure should not be resorted to, while there remained a hope of carrying the Bill without it, and that he has urged and encouraged all that could tend to realise that hope. But he has not at any time withdrawn the consent to which he had pledged himself, nor attached any restriction to the period at which it should be taken advantage of.

His Majesty has, however, strongly objected to the *growing* extent of the measure, which he had certainly not contemplated when it was first proposed, and upon which he would have placed a *positive* restriction if he had considered it possible that an addition of fifty or sixty Peers could ever be suggested to him; and yet that is the number which was recently mentioned to him by Earl Grey. With regard to the other restrictions, those which he declared to be '*inseparable*' from his consent '*and irrevocable,*' *he is induced now to advert to them only as conditions to which he is determined, under any circumstances, to adhere.*

Subject to these conditions and to that consideration which the King is bound to give to the propriety of limiting the extent of any proposed addition to the House of Lords to a *reasonable* number, His Majesty is prepared to exercise that prerogative when circumstances shall call for it, and he shall be advised to do so; but he deems it to be his duty to call the serious attention of his confidential servants to the observations which he made in his letter of the 30th ult., and to the embarrassment under which they would be placed by resorting to this measure, if the second reading should be carried and the Bill should be in Committee.

Nor can the King omit to point out to them the apparent inconsistency of the intended course, namely, the re-introduction of the Bill in the House of Lords in the first instance, and the animadversion to which it may be liable, inasmuch as hitherto the discussion of the measure in *the House of Commons and its decision there have been considered and declared to be of almost paramount importance, and the voice of the House of Lords has been held out as of very secondary moment, such indeed as might without objection be obtained and secured by the nomination of additional members. Yet it is now proposed that the House of Lords should take the lead in this momentous question, and should legislate for the House of Commons.*

The King cannot also but doubt the expediency of a prorogation of Parliament upon this occasion. But this is a question which must be decided by circumstances; and, indeed, what His Majesty cannot help feeling is, that all that is now connected with this question and with the measure submitted for his consideration and decision is *speculative, and calculated to engage him and commit him in that which is uncertain in its nature, its extent, and its issue.* WILLIAM R.

No. 394.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

Windsor Castle, April 5, 1832.

My dear Lord,—The King has ordered me to send your Lordship the enclosed letter in reply to the Minute of Cabinet he received from you, and I cannot do so without apologising for the writing, but His Majesty having desired me last night at eleven to introduce in it an abstract of all the material part of the correspondence connected with the question of creating Peers, I had to read over again and to make extracts and notes from the correspondence since 4th January, then to write this formidable letter, and to copy it in part. I was up the greater part of last night, have been at work all this day, and am quite knocked up.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 395.

Earl Grey to the King.

Downing Street, April 6, 1832.

Earl Grey presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and has the honour of acknowledging your Majesty's most gracious letter of yesterday, which he has just received, and will lose no time in communicating to his colleagues.

In the meantime Earl Grey cannot suffer even this opportunity to pass without expressing his entire concurrence in the perfect accuracy of the recapitulation in your Majesty's letter of all that has passed in the various communications respecting a further creation of Peers, which have passed between your Majesty and the rest of your confidential servants and himself; and at the same time of acknowledging the undeviating consistency of your Majesty's opinions and conduct, and the perfect openness and confidence with which your

Majesty's sentiments upon this, and upon every other subject have at all times been stated.

Earl Grey is also anxious to take the earliest occasion of assuring your Majesty that nothing could be further from his intention, and from that of his colleagues, than to press your Majesty prematurely for a decision upon a speculative and contingent event. He hopes that the case in which such a decision would be to be acted upon will not arise. But it is not one which can be excluded from consideration as impossible, and, in the event of its occurrence, the necessity of immediately resorting to one of the alternatives which have been brought under your Majesty's consideration could not be avoided.

Earl Grey has now the honour of sending for your Majesty's consideration the lists which he has made out of persons from whom, if a new creation of Peers should be deemed advisable, the addition might be made. In making these lists, Earl Grey has endeavoured to select the names which appeared to be the least liable to objection; but as no steps could be taken to ascertain more directly the disposition of the persons enumerated in them, Earl Grey could only found these lists upon his opinion of the qualifications, and his belief from the applications which he has received, and from other circumstances, of the willingness of the persons named to accept with gratitude the high honour of being raised to the Peerage, if it should be your Majesty's pleasure to confer it upon them. He has suffered to remain in the lists, which had been prepared before your Majesty's letter arrived, the names of Commoners who would make a permanent addition to the Peerage. This he acknowledges not to be consistent with the condition which your Majesty had prescribed as irrevocable, and which he understands to be now repeated in your Majesty's letter; but he had hoped that, without disrespect to your Majesty, or an improper resistance of your Majesty's opinion, he might bring this matter again under your Majesty's consideration, believing, as he had the honour of stating to your Majesty on Wednesday last, that the addition of Commoners of high station and respectability, of ancient families and great opulence, would be that which would be least detrimental to the permanent influence and character of the House of Lords.

The lists enclosed are two, the first containing the names of those whose creation would seem to be the most advisable; the second, a supplementary list, from which any alteration in the former might be supplied.

All which, &c. GREY.

No. 396.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, April 6, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I have to acknowledge your letter accompanying that of His Majesty. I am not surprised at your being knocked up after the fatigue you have undergone.

I have sent the King's letter in circulation, and will assemble the Cabinet upon it as soon as I can. But this discussion has come very inconveniently upon me, at a moment when all my time is required to prepare for the battle we have to fight on Monday next.

I hope His Majesty will consider favourably even what may appear in opposition to his own opinions and to the conditions which he had annexed to his acquiescence in a creation of Peers. But I have experienced too many proofs of the candour and kindness with which he has at all times received any representations which I have made to him, to doubt his receiving this statement of my opinion in any other light, than that of my having been impelled by a sense of duty to submit it to him. Whatever His Majesty's decision may be, I shall bow to it with perfect respect, and with a full acknowledgment that I can have no right to complain of it.

My calculations certainly would leave little doubt that the second reading will be carried, though probably not by a large majority. But I know that our adversaries express great confidence in a contrary result, and they are indefatigable in their exertions. If the event should justify their expectations, the next day must see either our resignation, or the alternative which has been submitted to His Majesty. I ventured on this account to suggest to the King, how much it was to be desired that he should be in town at the time. His answer was, that he could be here, if a messenger were immediately sent to him, within a very few hours. This is quite true, but still, if not attended with inconvenience to His Majesty, I think there would be great advantage in his being on the spot.

In his letter His Majesty expresses himself, with respect to the suggestion that the new Bill should, in the first instance, be brought into the House of Lords, as if there were something inconsistent in that course with what has previously been done. There does not appear to me to be any such inconsistency. A Bill of this nature may undoubtedly originate in either House, though, as it relates more particularly to the House of Commons, it would appear better, if there existed no particular reason for doing otherwise, that it should originate there. But, in the present case, it has twice passed the House of Commons. There can be no doubt of their opinion in its favour; and, by introducing it first in the Lords, the great difficulty which has hitherto obstructed it would be at once got over, and it afterwards would pass the House of Commons, there being no longer any hope of its ultimate rejection, with much less opposition than has hitherto been made to it. A long period of suspense and agitation would, therefore, be saved, and this business brought to a more speedy conclusion.

I have not another moment, and am, &c. GREY.

No. 397.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, April 7, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I did not delay submitting your Lordship's letter of yesterday to the King with that which you addressed to him, and His Majesty was anxious that you should receive his answer as soon as possible, in order that it might be taken into consideration with his letter of yesterday. He is sensible that this discussion must come very inconveniently upon you at this period, but it has not arisen from any *fresh* difficulty or objection started by him, as His Majesty adheres *in toto* to the assurance he had given and the declarations he had made; and I am *firmly persuaded* that it would be in vain to attempt to prevail upon him to depart from either.

Your Lordship will observe that His Majesty, true to his purpose, has not hesitated to express his intention of sanctioning the nomination of the thirty-eight eldest sons and collaterals, and of Lord F. Osborne and Mr. Dundas, forty in all, without objecting to one; and you will gather from His Majesty's observations that, when he objected to any nominations which might produce a *permanent* increase of the Peerage, he did not do so with any expectation of limiting the resource placed at your disposal so as to defeat your object. He, therefore, naturally considers that it remains for the Peers who have professed themselves strenuous advocates and supporters of the measure of Parliamentary Reform and the present Bill, and for their sons or collateral heirs, to establish their adherence to principle and their claim to consistency by the sacrifice of any personal feeling which may produce their unwillingness to take advantage of the proffered advancement.

His Majesty hopes and believes that there exists no solid ground for apprehension that the Bill will be lost on the second reading; but, in consequence of the desire again expressed by your Lordship, that he should be in town at the time, His Majesty will go to St. James's on Tuesday next, and will arrive there at the usual hour, and will stay on if necessary.

The reports which reach His Majesty from *various* quarters of the probable numbers on a division, agree in estimating the majority for the second reading at from twelve to fifteen.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 398

The King to Earl Grey.

Windsor Castle, April 7, 1832.

The King acknowledges the receipt of Earl Grey's letter of yesterday, which reached him in the evening; and His Majesty will not delay, until he shall receive such further communication as may result from any meeting of the Cabinet, to assure Earl Grey of the satisfaction he has derived from his admission of the perfect accuracy of the recapitulation in His Majesty's letter of the 5th, of all that had passed respecting a further creation of Peers, and from his acknowledgment of the undeviating consistency of his opinions and conduct. The King is sensible also of the unreserved and handsome manner in which Earl Grey has expressed his sentiments upon these points, and of the temper and spirit in which he has met His Majesty's communications upon this or any other occasion in which there may not have been a perfect accordance in their opinions.

But His Majesty's chief motive for not deferring to acknowledge Lord Grey's letter is to state his regret that, notwithstanding what has been represented to him in terms and on grounds for which he gives him full credit, and notwithstanding anything that may be submitted to him to the same effect in a more formal shape, he cannot reconcile it to the view which he has taken of the subject, to the principle on which he has, in consequence, determined to act, and to his sense of the necessity and propriety of adhering to a determination so positively and repeatedly declared, to agree to the introduction of the names of any Commoners, who would make a permanent addition to the Peerage, in the list which he shall be disposed to approve, if an addition to the House of Lords, for the purpose of carrying the Reform Bill, should unfortunately become indispensable.

His Majesty has looked over the lists which accompanied Earl Grey's letter of yesterday, and he finds them to present, independently of those whom he must exclude, thirty-four eldest sons and collaterals, four others on a supplementary list, and Lord Francis Osborne and Mr. Dundas, being forty in all. To the advancement of these to the Peerage he will not object, if the dreaded necessity should occur; nor can he conceive it possible, adverting to the permanent change which may be expected to take place in the votes of the Bishops, that this number should not prove sufficient in any case.

But it is impossible that His Majesty should not be very much struck by the extraordinary difference in the lists of eldest sons now submitted to him by Earl Grey and those communicated by him on the 9th of January last, as offering a number of eldest sons, collaterals, &c., from which a selection might possibly be made. Upon reference to these lists, His Majesty finds (besides those considered doubtful or otherwise ineligible) fifty-two eldest sons of Peers, fifteen collaterals of childless Peers, and seven Scotch and Irish Peers not likely to have children, and if to these be added Lord Francis Osborne and Mr. Dundas, the total number from which His Majesty was led to believe that a selection might be made was not less than seventy-four.

The King may be told, that many of those whose names appear in the former lists have declared their unwillingness to be brought forward upon this occasion; but as they, or their fathers, have been forward in promoting and supporting the measure for the success of which this extraordinary creation of Peers may be required, His Majesty would, if such should be the case, consider himself justified in expressing his surprise that they should shrink from the test and risk the loss of their cause, rather than make the sacrifice of the doubts which may have arisen in their minds of the eligibility of advancement to the Peerage upon such an occasion, and which can alone account for the absence of so many names from the second list. WILLIAM R.

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No. 399.

Minute of Cabinet.

Downing Street, April 7, 1832.

At a Meeting held at the Foreign Office this day,

PRESENT:

[Probably all the Cabinet were present, but in the copy of this Minute which has been preserved, a blank is left for the names, which would of course be filled up in that made for the King.]

Your Majesty's servants have taken into their most serious consideration your Majesty's answer to their

Cabinet Minute of April 3, and also your Majesty's letter to Earl Grey of this day.

Your Majesty's servants beg leave humbly to state their full concurrence in the feeling already expressed by Earl Grey, of the condescending kindness which marks every part of your Majesty's most gracious communication.

They cannot but express their concern that 'all that is now connected with this question, and with the measures submitted for your Majesty's consideration and decision, should have appeared to your Majesty to be speculative, and calculated to engage your Majesty to commit yourself in that which is uncertain in its nature, its extent, and its issue.'

Your Majesty's servants trust that they will stand acquitted in your Majesty's opinion of any design to press your Majesty unnecessarily to commit yourself by a premature decision on any matter which could safely be left in a state of uncertainty and doubt.

But feeling, for the reasons already intimated to your Majesty, if the Reform Bill should unfortunately and unexpectedly be rejected, that there could not be the delay even of a single day in adopting one of the alternatives submitted to your Majesty, they conceive it to be their duty to bring fully under your Majesty's consideration all the circumstances which might enable your Majesty, on the occurrence of that event, at once positively to determine which of these courses should be pursued.

Of your Majesty's adherence to a determination more than once expressed, not to allow any permanent addition to the Peerage from the rank of Commoner, they certainly can have no right to complain; and they are fully sensible of your Majesty's goodness in being ready to consent, 'if the dreaded necessity should arise,' to the creation of forty Peers, who might be selected from the lists submitted to your Majesty by Earl Grey, who would not be subject to that objection.

But they must beg leave to observe, that this number might possibly be found inadequate to the exigency of the case, up to the full extent of which they had already submitted to your Majesty their opinion, that if Peers were to be created at all, it would be necessary to act.

It might be possible, however, out of the lists before submitted to your Majesty by Earl Grey, and from those of Irish and Scotch Peers, to add a further number, if your Majesty should be disposed to consent to it, though perhaps not of so eligible a description as might otherwise be found.

They think it necessary however, in consequence of the observations made by your Majesty on the lists which have been submitted to your Majesty, to add that the last list consists of a selection from the larger lists before formed by Earl Grey, after deducting such names as, for various reasons, it appeared not to be expedient to propose to your Majesty; and that, even in the present list, there may be some whom they might perhaps eventually be obliged to withdraw.

Your Majesty's servants feel most grateful to your Majesty for your kind acquiescence in Earl Grey's request, in consenting to come to town on Tuesday, an inconvenience to which nothing could have induced them to propose to your Majesty to put yourself, except the conviction of the absolute necessity of an instant decision as to the course to be taken by your Majesty's Government, upon the possible result of the division in the House of Lords.

All which, &c.

No. 400.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, April 7, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—The Cabinet assembled today between two and three, and we have had so many matters to discuss, that I am again obliged to throw myself on His Majesty's indulgence for having been obliged, in order to save the post, to have the Minute in answer to His Majesty's letter copied by another hand.

It was not thought necessary or right to enter into a more detailed answer to His Majesty's letter; indeed it appeared to me better and more respectful in every sense, to leave the matter where it is till after the second reading, His Majesty being now in full possession of all the materials which are necessary to decide upon the course to be taken upon the event of the division without delay.

The lists, which were delivered to the King on the 9th of January, contained nearly all the names of those who might by possibility be added to the House of Lords without a permanent addition to the Peerage. But I thought I had explained to His Majesty that, when they came to be looked into more accurately, it might be found necessary to reduce them considerably. Many names have accordingly been withdrawn, some because we found that they were not to be depended upon, others because their opinions were found to be adverse, and others again because their fathers objected. There were some also whom, I confess, I did not think it would be for the credit of His Majesty's Government to call up. With regard to the objections of fathers, there can be no doubt that, from those who feel as strongly as I do the necessity of carrying this question, it might be expected that these objections should give way. I stand myself in that situation. Howick's name is not in the reduced list. I certainly should not persist in withholding it if the number wanted could not be otherwise supplied. But it is of great importance to him to continue in a situation where he is obtaining a great knowledge of business, and forming himself in the House of Commons for more important places; and, indeed, I could not afford to give him at present what would be necessary for him as a Peer. Some of these reasons apply also to Lord ——, whose name is also omitted, and to others; and I am afraid that we must not count so much on the self-denial and patriotism of all the Peers, as to expect that some of them would not pertinaciously adhere to the objections which they had made even on less defensible grounds.

I should feel it to be altogether inconsistent with the duty and the respect which I owe to His Majesty, to insist further upon an opinion which is opposed to that which he has more than once declared, and which is now expressed in a manner to prevent all further discussion upon it. But I cannot help lamenting it. The creation of Irish or Scotch to be English Peers would, equally with the creation of Commoners, make a permanent addition to the numbers of the House of Lords, and this appears to me to be the great evil. Many of them are very poor.

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It was not without great unwillingness that I ventured to express my desire, which was also felt by my colleagues, that the King should come to town on Tuesday; and the kind manner in which His Majesty has consented to do so has, if possible, increased my regret at being compelled to press any thing that might interfere with his personal convenience. But the case is so important, and the necessity of immediate decision so urgent, that I could not help it. I shall do all I can to bring the debate to a close on Tuesday night; but this, you know, does not depend upon me.

You will see the account of last night's debate in the House of Lords. It was marked with all the character of all Irish debates. My speech does not appear to be given, but I have not had time to read the papers. I grieved to see the Duke of Wellington again courting that Orange faction, which has been the bane of Ireland and of the empire. From the bitterness of Lord Westmeath's hostility, I think it nearly certain that he will vote against the Reform Bill on the second reading.

Our prospects do not improve, and the adversaries of the measure are more unblushing than ever in the confidence with which they circulate statements of the King's dislike of it, and of his aversion to a creation of Peers. They boast also of the favour of ——. I know how to despise all these stories, and the authors of them, but I wish I could add that they have been altogether without effect.

No. 401.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, April 8, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have had the honour to submit to the King, your Lordship's letter of yesterday, accompanying the Minute of Cabinet of the same date, which His Majesty has ordered me to say he considers as an answer to his two last communications to you, and as not requiring any reply at present.

I have also submitted to the King the list of Peers received from Mr. Wood, from which that sent by you on the 6th to His Majesty was selected; and I am directed to say that, much as he dislikes making any remark, or holding any opinions which are at variance with your Lordship's sentiments and those of his other confidential servants, he cannot help observing, that the inspection of this list, which appears to have been made with great care, is calculated to strengthen rather than to weaken the position he has taken, and which he does not feel at liberty to abandon, though it has been far from his wish or intention, upon this or any occasion, to decline receiving any opinion upon the subject which may be submitted to him, or to exclude it from his consideration.

But while His Majesty notices the names of Lords —— and —— on that list, he considers that he is borne out in the remarks he made in his last letter; and that, in the situation in which he has been placed by the proceedings on the Reform Bill, he has a right to expect from others a sacrifice of feeling or scruples, or pride, corresponding with that which he has himself made, to a greater extent than he had ever contemplated when the Bill was introduced, or even when an addition to the House of Lords was first proposed to him for the purpose of carrying the Bill.

His Majesty has ordered me to make from that list a minute of names which is annexed to this letter; and to observe that, while there exists this resource, which (allowing for all reasonable and admissible objections), must be ample towards making up, with the list already selected and agreed to by him, the number required, His Majesty cannot see any reason for departing from the principle on which he consented to any addition to the House of Lords upon this occasion.

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The King is quite sensible of your desire not to put him to personal inconvenience, but His Majesty apprehends none from going to London on Tuesday, and, in some respects, a few days' stay at St. James's will suit other general purposes.

He does not think you will be able to bring the debate to a close on Tuesday night, but he will now, at any rate, stay in town until Friday, and until Saturday if necessary. He laments the continued violence and hostility of the Opposition, and the uncertainty which seems to hang over the issue of this struggle, as well as the expedients which are resorted to, to raise doubts of His Majesty's inclination to support his Government; but he conceives that the issue of similar expectations and reports on former occasions must satisfy all men of sound mind, of the groundless nature of such rumours, though it is natural enough that they should take it for granted that he dislikes the creation of Peers.

I have written this letter, and made the extracts from the lists received from Mr. Wood in the King's room, and, upon reading it, find I have omitted to say, with reference to your Lordship's chief objection to Lord Howick's elevation to the Peerage, that Lord Howard de Walden sat for some time in the House of Lords, while he held his office of Under-Secretary of State. But allowing his to be on this and other grounds a fair exception, His Majesty has adverted particularly to the names of —— and ——, whose exclusion, considering the rank and the situation of their fathers, and the decided part taken by them with the Government, appears to him calculated to give a strong colour to the suspicion, that many of the leading Peers shrink from being personally committed on this measure, and therefore to prove seriously injurious to the course taken by the Government.

I have, &c. H. Taylor.

P.S.—The King remarked, though without ordering me to communicate it, that he does not see why Lord Palmerston should not be called up to the House of Lords, especially as the discussions on Foreign Policy take place chiefly in that House.

No. 402.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor, April 9, 1832.

My dear Lord,—Sir Philip Sidney mentioned to me yesterday, that the general opinion among the Anti-Reformers is, that your Lordship will carry the second reading with a majority proportionate to the impression which may be made by the manner in which the general features of the question may be introduced, for which many have declared they will *lay by*. Among those he mentioned Lord de Ros, who had held this language to him, and who had named five or six of his friends, or told him there were that number so disposed.

I did not like to put any question to Sir Philip Sidney, and he volunteered this communication; but I send it to you as it may be of use. His words were, 'the tone and the temper in which the business is opened;' but he afterwards added, 'if a disposition be shown to admit reasonable modifications.'

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Pray excuse haste, and believe, &c. H. TAYLOR.

I make this communication, by desire of His Majesty, for your *private* information.

No. 403.

Earl Grey to the King.

Downing Street, April 10, 1832. 1 A.M.

Earl Grey has the honour of transmitting to your Majesty a list of the Peers present, and of the speakers in the debate. Earl Grey endeavoured, as much as possible, to avoid anything that could irritate, and to adopt as conciliatory a tone as possible consistently with the necessary support of his own opinion, in obedience to the suggestion which he had the honour of receiving this morning, by your Majesty's commands, from Sir Herbert Taylor. Lord Grey hopes he was not altogether unsuccessful in pursuing this line.

Lord Ellenborough followed Earl Grey, and, taking advantage of all the topics which applied to the feelings and prejudices of the House, appeared to make a considerable impression, which was not sufficiently taken off by Lord Melbourne's answer. There was nothing remarkable in the rest of the debate. The Bishop of Durham made a speech with great hostility to the Bill, but civil to the Government; and Lord Haddington made a clear and able statement in explanation of his reasons for voting in favour of the Bill on this occasion.

The debate will probably close to-morrow night.

All which, &c. GREY.

No. 404.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

Downing Street, April 10, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I was in hopes that I should see you this morning, having intended to pay my duty to the King; but I am so completely knocked up that I must devote the short interval till the House meets again, to nurse myself for the continuance of the debate. I shall be obliged to you, therefore, to make my excuses to His Majesty, and to add that I hope to be able to wait upon him to-morrow at any hour that it may be convenient to His Majesty to allow me that honour, as there appears every probability that the debate will terminate to-night. It has not hitherto been very satisfactory, though I studiously observed the line of conciliation.

Lord Ellenborough did all he could to excite the feelings of the House against the Bill and its authors, and scarcely less hostility to both was marked even by those former opponents who are now to vote for the second reading. The division will be so close as to be within the reach of accidents, which always seem to turn out unfavourably for us.

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If I could go over the list with you I could give you, what I think, satisfactory reasons for all the omissions. I should be very glad to have Lord Palmerston's assistance in the House of Lords, but there is already rather too great a proportion of the Cabinet there; and if he were brought up, there would be no Secretary of State in the House of Commons. Howick is the representative of the Colonial Department in the House of Commons, and, if he were called up, Lord Goderich being in the House of Lords must resign his office. Lord H. de Walden, you will recollect, was secretary to Mr. Canning, who was in the House of Commons: but I will go through the list with you when I have an opportunity of seeing you.

I have said that I will not recur to the question of creating new Peers who would make a permanent addition to the House of Lords; neither will I. But has the disadvantage of removing so many eldest sons from the House of Commons been considered, particularly those who represent the most popular counties? They form the natural and best link between the Lords and the people, and by their removal just at the moment of a reform might open the places they represent. In the West Riding, for instance, where Lord Morpeth's return would be secure, to some candidate whom one would not wish to see elected.

I have, &c. GREY.

No. 405.

Earl Grey to the King.

Downing Street, April 11, 1832.

Earl Grey presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and has the honour of enclosing the lists of the number of Peers present, and the speakers in the debate.

The debate on the second reading was preceded by an angry personal discussion, which arose on the presenting of a petition by Lord Wynford, of which the Marquis of Londonderry and the Earl of Falmouth took advantage to attack the conduct and consistency of the Duke of Richmond and the Marquis of Cleveland.

The debate on the second reading was conducted with more moderation, but with some severe attacks from Lord Mansfield, the Duke of Wellington, and others, on the change of conduct in Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe, and those who, like them, had voted against the second reading of the former Bill. These attacks were well answered, more especially by the Earl of Harrowby, in a speech of remarkable ability and effect. The Earl of Mansfield's was also a very able speech, as was also Lord Wharncliffe's.

All which, &c. GREY.

No. 406.

Earl Grey to the King.

Downing Street, April 12, 1832.
Quarter-past 1 A.M.

Earl Grey has the honour of enclosing as usual, for your Majesty's information, the lists of the Peers present to-night in the House of Lords, and the speakers in the debate.

The House adjourned again as your Majesty expected, and on account of your Majesty's dinner, till Friday next.

As the list will furnish the names and order of the speakers, Earl Grey has only to remark, that the speeches most deserving notice were those of the Bishop of London, the Bishop of Exeter, and the Marquis of Lansdowne: the first, calm, clear, and in a tone and spirit becoming his situation, assigning his reasons for supporting the Bill; the second certainly showing great ability, but still more remarkable for other qualities of which Earl Grey could not describe the character, within the bounds which he ought to observe in writing to your Majesty. He was well answered by Lord Lansdowne, who spoke with his usual ability. The Bishops of Lincoln and Llandaff, in short and becoming speeches, expressed their intention of voting for the Bill.

All which, &c. GREY.

No. 407.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

St. James's Palace, April 14, 1832.

My dear Lord,—The King has ordered me to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's letter of this morning and the enclosures, and to express His Majesty's sincere satisfaction that the Bill has at length been committed in the House of Lords.* Nor does His Majesty regret the postponement of the Committee until after the holidays, as it will allow time for cool consideration.

His Majesty will be glad to see you at half-past-three, or as late as four, if more agreeable to you; and, as he wishes you to get as much rest as possible, he has ordered me to send this to Mr. Wood, to be delivered at his discretion.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

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* The division on the second reading of the Bill was,

For the Motion, present .	128	Against it, present .	126
Proxies .	56	Proxies .	49
	184		175

Majority, 9.

The House adjourned at a quarter past seven on the morning of Saturday, April 14.

No. 408.

The King to Earl Grey.

Windsor Castle, April 16, 1832.

The King's mind has dwelt so much and so anxiously upon considerations connected with the Foreign Policy of this country, and the principles by which it should, in his opinion, be governed, arising out of some observations made to him by Earl Grey in his interviews with him on Thursday and on Saturday last, that His Majesty does not consider that it would be acting fairly by Earl Grey, or doing justice to himself, if he were to conceal from him the uneasiness to which they have given rise.

The King has long apprehended that this country may be gradually and imperceptibly, and, he verily believes, unintentionally, drawn into the adoption and the establishment of a system of Foreign Policy which appears to His Majesty inconsistent with its real interests and its permanent prosperity, and calculated to alienate from it all Governments which are not disposed to encourage revolutionary projects and innovations detructive of existing power and authority.

What dropped from Earl Grey was viewed by the King as indications, certainly slight, but still as indications, of what he may be called upon to take into his consideration, namely, a more earnest and more direct interference respecting Poland than has yet been offered by this country; and a disposition to unite, for this and other objects, more closely with France; and therefore to treat, as undeserving of attention, the reports and appearance of designs entertained by France to extend her establishments in the Mediterranean by adding to the possession of Algiers, and other points on the coast of Barbary, that of the Island of Minorca, and possibly some others.

With regard to the first point, the King must call Earl Grey's attention to a letter which he addressed to Viscount Palmerston on the 25th of November last, with reference to the instructions given to Lord Heytesbury about that period, respecting the construction to be claimed for the articles of the Treaty of Vienna relating to the Polish Constitution, and respecting the Polish question generally.

His Majesty's sentiments are stated so much at length in that letter, that it is unnecessary for him to do more than to request Earl Grey's perusal of it, and to add that his opinions have continued the same, as may be shown by his remark upon the draft of instructions to Lord Heytesbury, submitted to His Majesty by Viscount Palmerston on the 18th or 19th ult. And if there should be any intention of calling upon the King to sanction further representation or remonstrance to the Court of St. Petersburg respecting Poland, His Majesty desires that his objections and his remarks, as recorded in the above letter, may be taken into the serious consideration of his confidential servants.

The King wishes to draw Earl Grey's attention also to his recent correspondence with Viscount Palmerston on the subject of the instructions sent to Mr. Seymour, with respect to the proposed administrative changes in the Papal dominions; and His Majesty is desirous that this correspondence should be laid before the Cabinet, as it will show that his sentiments with regard to the Foreign Policy which should be pursued by this country have undergone no change; and that he dreads and deprecates at present, as he did in November, as he has ever done, the adoption of too liberal a system by this country, too ready and unreserved a leaning to the 'spirit of the times,' and the eager encouragement of principles and projects which must have the effect of exciting the jealousy and suspicion of its ancient allies, without offering, in the closer connexion with France, any security or advantage which shall afford adequate compensation for the change, as it is impossible to place any reliance upon the stability of its Government, upon the consistency of its policy, the permanency of its co-operation, or the sincerity of its professions.

His Majesty is not disposed to undervalue the importance of being upon good terms with France, or even the advantage which England may derive from this circumstance in its negotiations with other Powers. He is not inclined to deny that the peace of Europe may have been mainly preserved by the concert of measures between England and France with respect to the Belgic question in its more recent stage; and His Majesty is willing to believe, that the good effects of this union may be felt in other quarters, so long as it shall suit the views and the immediate interests of France to pursue a pacific policy. But His Majesty does not trust France. He does not believe that she has abandoned her schemes of conquest and of extension of territory, or her designs of disturbing the tranquillity and the prosperity of other countries, by the propagation of revolutionary doctrines and principles; and His Majesty is anxious that this country should carefully abstain from committing itself unwarily in the support of measures, which may possibly accord with the spirit of the times, but which aim at the destruction of all established authority, and which it is therefore His Majesty's determination, as it is his duty, to resist to the utmost of his power.

The King may be told, and he does not doubt, that M. Casimir Perrier is a strenuous advocate for the preservation of peace, that many others connected with the administration in France, and interested in the maintenance of the present order of things, may feel inclined to sacrifice to this object designs which would be at variance with it; but he believes this feeling to be selfish, and not to result from any fixed or honest principle; and he is confident that the French Government, such as it is, would lend itself to any project which might prove injurious to other States, and would take advantage of any casual circumstance which might promote such end; nay, would not scruple to create it, if it thought it could do so without incurring the risk of detection.

This has been shown in the conduct of its agents, from General Guilleminot to Captain Gallois and Colonel Combes. Their treachery and their attempts to promote war or revolution have been too gross to escape detection, or to relieve their Government from the necessity of disavowing their acts and recalling them; but it has been stated that they acted under instructions from some one of the Ministers, and their impunity has given a colour to the statement in every instance.

All these are circumstances which, in His Majesty's opinion, would point out the necessity of closely watch-ing the proceedings of France, and, above all, its progressive endeavours to extend and strengthen its establishments in the Mediterranean. They would also show the impolicy of uniting too closely with France in the prosecution of measures tending to give umbrage to and to alarm other Powers, whose friendship and good-will it may be material to preserve, in order eventually to check a spirit of interference which has not ceased to exist, although it may be dormant; a spirit which is even directed to the encouragement of the encroachments of subjects upon the established rights of Sovereigns, and to the interruption and defeat of any attempt to check such encroachments.

Such being the King's feelings, such his apprehensions, he must be deeply interested in the consideration of every communication which may be made to the Court of St. Petersburg, or to any other Power, relative to the state of Poland, or with respect to the general policy of this country; and it is his earnest wish that no instruction should be sent to his Ministers abroad which has not obtained his previous concurrence.

WILLIAM R.

No. 409.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private and confidential)

Windsor Castle, April 16, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I cannot transmit the enclosed letter from the King to your Lordship without adding, that the questions to which it applies appear to have agitated him a good deal. Your Lordship remarked to me on Saturday, after you left His Majesty, that his manner and conversation had not, on that day, or in the preceding interview, been so cordial or easy as usual; and I assured you, with truth, that he had said nothing to me which could justify the impression that there had been any change. I did not see the King after you left St. James's, nor until yesterday morning, as I dined with Lady Taylor's sisters at Kensington, and arrived here late on Saturday. Yesterday, however, His Majesty began at once, and very eagerly, upon what had dropped from your Lordship respecting Poland, and respecting the views of the French to extend their establishments in the Mediterranean, observing that he dreaded that the former question would be taken up so eagerly, as to risk compromising this country with every Power excepting France, and stating his determination not to sanction such a course; and observing, as to the latter, that the conduct pursued by the agents of France seemed to him to warrant his Government giving more credit than they were disposed to do, to the reports which occasionally reached them, of their insidious views, which he owned were a source of constant uneasiness to him, as was the disposition shown by his Government to unite with France in support of the introduction of *liberal* opinions and measures agreeably to 'the spirit of the times.' His Majesty added that he should, therefore, require that no instruction should be sent to his Ministers abroad until it had been submitted to and sanctioned by him.

I took the liberty of submitting to the King, that if such was the impression received, and the feeling it had produced, it appeared to me that it would be just towards your Lordship and his other confidential servants, and a relief to his own mind, to make to you an unreserved communication of it; and that I ventured to suggest that it could not be made too early, as it was very possible that he had mistaken your meaning and intention; and as, upon these occasions, a prompt explanation was desirable for all parties. His Majesty readily agreed to this, and gave me instructions for the accompanying letter. Your Lordship will observe that His Majesty's apprehension is not of recent growth, but that he has frequently expressed it to Lord Palmerston. Indeed, some of the expressions introduced in the instructions to Mr. Seymour, to which reference is made in His Majesty's letter to you, made a deep impression upon him.

You will, I am certain, give me credit for the sincerity of the motive which has induced me to make this communication to you, and not ascribe it to any disposition to undue interference.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

P.S.—His Majesty expressed a desire that you should receive his letter and read that to Lord Palmerston of 26th November, as well as the correspondence relating to the instructions to Mr. Seymour, before the Polish question should be again brought before the Cabinet.

No. 410.

(Extract.)

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, April 16, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—From what I can collect of the instruction to be moved by Lord Salisbury, I feel very much at ease about it; nor do I think that any manœuvre of this kind will have any effect beyond the trouble and delay it may occasion. I do not believe that there had been communication with respect to this proceeding either with Lord Harrowby or Lord Wharncliffe. I am anxious that this should be explained to the King, as I had expressed more apprehension, than there now seems to have been reason for, to His Majesty on the subject.

The arrival from Austria and Berlin of authority to exchange the ratifications is most satisfactory. Altogether I see things much more *couleur de rose* than I have done for a long time.

I have this moment received the box with the King's letter and yours, my answer to which I must defer till to-morrow.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 411.

Earl Grey to the King.

Downing Street, April 17, 1832.

Earl Grey presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and in acknowledging your Majesty's letter of yesterday, begs, in the first place, your Majesty's forgiveness for expressing the deep sense of pain which he has experienced from it.

Earl Grey had flattered himself with the assurance, derived from repeated expressions in your Majesty's most gracious communications to the Cabinet and to himself, that, whatever uneasiness may have occasionally attended some of the discussions on the Reform Bill, on every other subject, both of our domestic and our foreign policy, the views and conduct of your Majesty's present servants had met with your Majesty's constant and unequivocal approbation.

It is, therefore, a subject both of the deepest regret and the severest disappointment to Earl Grey, now to learn that your Majesty has long apprehended that this country may be drawn into the adoption of a system of foreign policy inconsistent 'with its real interests and its permanent prosperity;' and that what had dropped from Earl Grey in the interviews with which your Majesty had been pleased to honour him on Thursday and Saturday last, 'had been viewed by your Majesty as indications of what your Majesty might be called upon to take into consideration, viz. a more earnest and direct interference respecting Poland than has yet been offered by this country, and a disposition to unite, for this and other objects, more closely with France; and therefore to treat, as undeserving of attention, the reports and appearance of designs entertained by France to extend her establishments in the Mediterranean, by adding to the possession of Algiers, and other points on the coast of Barbary, that of the Island of Minorca, and possibly some others.'

It is with feelings more painful than he can express, that Earl Grey has transcribed from your Majesty's letter these passages, which so strongly indicate a great diminution of your Majesty's confidence in your Majesty's present Ministers, and which convey so severe a censure of the course which they are pursuing.

Earl Grey is not conscious of having at any time, either personally or by letter, said anything which could afford just ground for suspecting either his colleagues or himself of any indifference to the views of France, or to the important duty of guarding against any hostile designs which she might cherish.

That it has been his opinion, and that of your Majesty's other servants, that a friendly understanding between Great Britain and France is at this time of essential importance to the peace of Europe, is most true; and Earl Grey did not understand, nor does he now conceive, that these views have not met with your Majesty's concurrence. But he trusts that they have not been so exclusively entertained by your Majesty's servants, whatever may be their belief in the pacific disposition of the present Government of France, as to make them abate the vigilance which the situation of that country must always demand. It has, on the contrary, always been their object, in cultivating friendly relations with France, so to regulate their conduct, as to secure to your Majesty's Government the full power of acting with effect in any circumstances that might occur, and of defending the position which they had taken, against any dangers by which it might be threatened. For this purpose it has been their undeviating policy to preserve the Union which has so happily subsisted between this country and the other great Powers of the Continent, without forgetting what was due to the character and influence of England in those proceedings in which they have been mutually engaged.

With respect to Poland, it is undoubtedly true that Earl Grey has expressed to your Majesty, and your Majesty's Ministers have felt that Russia, by her late measures in effecting the total destruction of the national existence of that kingdom, has violated, both in their letter and their spirit, the stipulations of the Treaty of Vienna. Foreseeing and apprehending such a result, your Majesty's Secretary of State had, during the continuance of the Polish war, conveyed to the Court of St. Petersburg your Majesty's just expectations that the treaty of Vienna would be adhered to. To these representations no satisfactory answer was given at the time, and they have since been entirely disregarded. But though His Majesty's Ministers have felt that this might have afforded just ground for complaint and remonstrance, as was stated in the conversations referred to by your Majesty, by Earl Grey, he is not aware of having indicated any disposition to advise 'a more earnest or more direct interference in the affairs of Poland than had hitherto been proposed to your Majesty.' He did, indeed, state that what was now passing in that country was likely to excite a strong feeling both here and in France; but he must have been greatly misunderstood by your Majesty, if he was supposed to have expressed any opinion leading to a direct interference in connection with France, which, on the contrary, if his recollection does not fail him, he stated to your Majesty, if it had not been unadvisable from other considerations, was rendered impossible by the union of Austria and Prussia with the Court of St. Petersburg in the measures taken by that Government.

In the same manner, with respect to the alleged design of the Government of France to possess itself of Minorca, Earl Grey must have expressed himself in a manner most contrary to his real feelings and opinions, if your Majesty understood him to treat such designs with indifference. He did, indeed, express his disbelief of the story that such designs had been openly stated by one of the French Ministers. It is not likely that any man of common sense, entertaining such a design, would promulgate it in a way that would insure its defeat. But Earl Grey stated, at the same time, that if such an attempt were made, it must immediately be resisted by the most determined exertion of all the power of Great Britain.

A policy of a liberal character, and suited to the circumstances of the times, is undoubtedly that which, in the present state of this country and of Europe, it would be Earl Grey's wish to recommend to your Majesty. But in the pursuit of such a policy he trusts that your Majesty's Ministers cannot be suspected of neglecting those essential securities, by which the independence of nations, in their relations with each other, must be maintained; and it is painful to him to find himself under the necessity of disclaiming any disposition to 'encourage principles and projects destructive of all established authority,' and incompatible with the peace of the world.

Having already stated that your Majesty's Ministers are not so far blinded by their confidence in the pacific and honourable intentions of the present Minister of France, as not to be on their guard against any change of councils in that country, it cannot be necessary for Earl Grey to say more than that, in the intercourse between your Majesty's Government and other Powers, the chief security, next to that of resting firmly on his own resources, to which any Minister will look, is that which is to be found in the interests of the Powers with which he has to treat.

The interests of the present French Government Earl Grey believes to be decidedly on the side of peace. On these, therefore, he places great reliance; but he does not lose sight of the desire, which may be supposed to exist at all times in that country, to diminish the influence and power of this. The existence of such motives cannot be disregarded, and must be provided against. Nor is France the only Power against whose ambitious designs precautions ought to be taken. The advance of the power of Russia, though the interests which it threatens may be more remote, is, with a view to the security of your Majesty's Indian empire, not less an object of vigilance and attention.

Earl Grey had not seen, nor, having been engaged till a late hour after he received your Majesty's letter in the House of Lords, has he yet been able to refer to the letters from your Majesty to Lord Palmerston, to which your Majesty calls his attention; nor has he had an opportunity of consulting with his colleagues on the subject of your Majesty's letters.

But, for the relief of his own mind, Earl Grey found it impossible to delay expressing for himself the impression which your Majesty's communication has made upon him, and offering such explanation as appeared to him to be necessary, to set himself right, if possible, in your Majesty's opinion. And here he would abstain from trespassing farther on your Majesty's time at present, had it not been for the concluding passage in your Majesty's letter, which is so painful that he cannot help adverting to it.

Your Majesty is pleased to order that no instruction should be sent to your Majesty's Ministers abroad, which has not obtained your Majesty's previous concurrence. Earl Grey might have hoped that such an injunction could not have appeared to your Majesty to be required. Your Majesty's Ministers, he trusted, would have had credit with your Majesty for too just a sense of their duty, to allow of any communication with your Ministers abroad, which might commit your Majesty to a line of policy which had not previously received your Majesty's sanction. He trusted, at the same time, that the concurrence in views and sentiments between your Majesty and your servants might have allowed them in any case of urgency, without waiting for a previous communication with your Majesty, to convey to your Majesty's Ministers abroad such directions as they might justly presume to be in accordance with your Majesty's opinions.

Earl Grey is, therefore, most painfully compelled to consider this restriction as showing that your Majesty no longer reposes in your Majesty's Ministers the confidence by which alone they can be enabled to act, either usefully for your Majesty's service, or honourably for themselves. If that confidence is withdrawn, Earl Grey has no alternative left but that of humbly tendering to your Majesty his resignation of the office which he received from your Majesty's goodness, and in which he has been hitherto supported by your Majesty's approbation.

No. 412.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, April 17, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—When, in my letter to you yesterday, I stated that our prospects appeared to be improved, I little expected that, before I could close it, I should receive such a communication as that to which I have replied in the enclosed letter.

The pain it has given me is hardly to be expressed, and it was impossible for me to delay conveying to His Majesty the impression it had made upon me. It was, too, as unexpected as it was painful; and I cannot help fearing that His Majesty may have been influenced by representations made to him with respect to the conduct of the Government in matters of Foreign Policy, which have given an unfavourable bias to His Majesty's mind.

That His Majesty's confidence is diminished is too apparent, from the whole tenor of His Majesty's letter. It expresses not only a want of confidence, but even suspicion and distrust. If such are His Majesty's feelings, the only course consistent either with his own comfort, or the safety of his present advisers, is to resume a trust of which they can no longer discharge the duties, either usefully to His Majesty or honourably to themselves.

The Irish Committees and the business afterwards in both Houses will prevent my bringing to-day under the consideration of the Cabinet, the new and painful situation in which we are placed; but it was impossible for me to delay explaining to His Majesty my own feelings upon it. I shall be prepared to enter more fully into this subject with His Majesty to-morrow, when I hope to be allowed the honour of seeing him, if it should be His Majesty's wish that I should do so.

In the meantime, whatever may be the result, I hope His Majesty will be assured that there never can be any change in my devotion to his person, or in my gratitude for all the favours I have received from him.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 413.

The King to Earl Grey.

Windsor Castle, April 17, 1832. 11 P.M.

As the King will have an opportunity of seeing Earl Grey at St. James's to-morrow, it is unnecessary that His Majesty should now enter at any length into the subject and contents of the letter, His Majesty has received from him this evening; nor indeed could he, from want of time, do so otherwise than very imperfectly; but he considers it desirable, as it also may be satisfactory to Earl Grey, before his interview with him, that His Majesty should make a few observations which will, he trusts, have the effect of removing from his mind the painful impression which his letter of yesterday appears to have produced, and of quieting uneasiness which it had not been in His Majesty's contemplation to raise by any expression of his sentiments.

Earl Grey was perfectly justified in the conviction he entertained, that, setting aside certain contingencies arising out of the Reform Bill, which had been the source of uneasiness and of occasional difficulty, and which had produced a state of painful and of agitating suspense, the conduct of His Majesty's confidential servants had, on every other subject of the Domestic and Foreign Policy of this country, met with His Majesty's constant and unequivocal approbation.

This feeling has been often expressed to them individually and collectively; it has not ceased to exist; and His Majesty assures Earl Grey that he is greatly mistaken in the inference he appears to have drawn from His Majesty's manner and communications on recent occasions, that there is any diminution of his confidence, or the least desire to withdraw it from himself or from his colleagues, who have proved themselves so well deserving of it under very serious trial.

Above all the King owes it to himself, and to the honest principle which has guided his conduct, on all occasions, to declare that there is not the *slightest* ground for the impression which his recent communications may have produced upon Earl Grey, as would appear from his letter to Sir Herbert Taylor, that 'His Majesty has been influenced by representations made to him with respect to the conduct of the Government in matters of Foreign Policy, which have given an unfavourable bias to his mind.' He assures Earl Grey that he has not conversed, nor otherwise communicated, with any one, except his Ministers, upon this subject; and that the immediate occasion of his communication of yesterday was, as therein stated, connected of course with those which had passed with Viscount Palmerston on previous occasions.

Without reverting to what the King has said, without dwelling upon topics which are introduced in much detail in those documents, His Majesty conceives that he may appeal to them as proofs that, however he may have approved and sanctioned the general policy of his Government and their proceedings, he has not ceased to view with some uneasiness the possibility of this country being drawn unwarily and imperceptibly into too close a connection with France, and too great a deference 'to the spirit of the times;' and that he *had* more than once, and many months since, expressed that apprehension to Viscount Palmerston, and written to him in the spirit of his recent communication to Earl Grey. He is persuaded, indeed, that this uneasiness may be traced in other occasional communications to Viscount Palmerston, and even to Earl Grey, and that these must have betrayed his anxiety to caution them against the gradual adoption of a system of policy which would so ill-accord with his feelings, and with what he believes to be the interests of this country.

This expression of the King's sentiments cannot therefore be viewed as showing inconsistency, or as placing him in the situation of approving and condemning in the same breath. He has not withheld his approbation or sanction of what has been done; but he has noticed, as it occurred, that which appeared to him objectionable, and the grounds assigned for such objection afforded ample proof of the apprehension which he had recently expressed more forcibly, in consequence of his having, as it would appear from Earl Grey's letter of this day, misapprehended the intent of the observations he made, more especially with regard to the Polish question, the agitation of which, on account of the various and contending feelings which it excites, His Majesty has not ceased to contemplate with extreme uneasiness and alarm.

The King repeats that it is not his wish or intention now to enter further into the questions which have more immediately given rise to this correspondence; but he trusts that Earl Grey, and his other confidential servants will give him credit for not having concealed from them the feeling which, right or wrong, had found its way to his mind, sensible as they must be that there cannot be confidence where there is reserve, and that any delay or *shyness* in the utterance of his sentiments on this occasion would have ill-accorded with the spirit in which his communications with Earl Grey and his colleagues have been invariably conducted.

The subject is one of extreme importance, as between this country and the Continent, as between His Majesty and his Government; and it appears to His Majesty very material that there should be no restriction upon the discussion of it, or upon the expression of any feelings to which it may give rise, whether resulting from apprehension or misapprehension.

There is only one other point upon which His

Majesty will now touch, lest it should escape him to-morrow, and that is the French occupation of Ancona. He is aware that it has been a subject of regret to His Majesty's Government, and that they would have prevented it if they could have done so; and His Majesty is confident that they will not lose sight of the importance of shortening, as much as possible, the duration of that occupation. He cannot conceal from Earl Grey that he views it with jealousy, as he does every proceeding of France; and that he suspects, in every step France takes, an *arrière pensée*, at variance with its professions. This appears to him to have been betrayed in this instance as in many others. He is convinced that Captain Gallois and Colonel Combes, whose proceedings were decidedly those of Propagandists and Revolutionists, acted under secret instructions, and that those were issued with the hope that the flame would have been raised by those fire-brands, although, to save appearances, their conduct might be afterwards disavowed by those who directly or indirectly instructed them.

The King agrees with Earl Grey that the present French Government attaches importance to the preservation of peace; but he does not believe that this will secure other States from the attempts of France to disturb their tranquillity, and to sow dissension among them.

William R.

No. 414.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, April 17, 1832. 12 P.M.

My dear Lord,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of yesterday and this day, and to acquaint you that I have submitted them to the King.

To begin with the most interesting question, I will not deny that I had feared that His Majesty's letter of yesterday would prove very annoying to you, but that I had not anticipated the serious and painful impression it appears to have produced, as I concluded you must have seen His Majesty's letters to Lord Palmerston, which would have satisfied you that His Majesty had not taken up a new ground, or expressed to you feelings which he had concealed from others placed in confidential and responsible situations. I sincerely hope that the letter from the King, which I have the honour to forward to your Lordship with this, will have the effect of removing, in a great measure, the impression previously made, and of satisfying you that the free expression of His Majesty's sentiments does not imply a diminution of confidence. With regard to other distressing symptoms which you have once or twice noticed to me lately, I must observe, as before, that some allowance should be made for the effects of the continued agitation, during fourteen months, of a question which has assumed so many features, and has been the occasion of almost uninterrupted worry, uneasiness, and embarrassment. It is natural that all this should have produced some irritability and impatience;

and during His Majesty's last visit to London, and since his return here, there has been a good deal of nervous excitement, such as I had not observed before, and which I ascribe to the above causes. It is now subsiding, and His Majesty is resuming his usual calmness. These circumstances have, however, contributed to the more direct and more forcible expression of sentiments, which I can assure your Lordship that His Majesty has not ceased to entertain, and has repeatedly uttered to me.

* * * * *

What you say on the subject of the instruction to be moved by Lord Salisbury was very satisfactory to the King, particularly as to the absence of communication between him and Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 415.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, April 18, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I received the King's letter and yours this morning. Having had a conversation with His Majesty after the levee, it is not necessary for me to say anything more in answer to the former. I rest upon the assurance that His Majesty's confidence is not withdrawn; at the same time I perceived, with considerable pain, both in His Majesty's letter and in what passed in the interview with which he honoured me, symptoms of feelings which it must be to me a cause of deep regret that His Majesty should continue in any degree to entertain.

In stating to me that he had not withdrawn his confidence, His Majesty at the same time expressed, with some warmth, the necessity under which he felt himself of insisting that no instructions relating to Foreign Policy should be sent without his previous concurrence: the repetition of this, after what I had said in my letter to His Majesty on this point, gave me, I confess, considerable pain. I ventured to remind His Majesty that, in no case, had any instructions of importance been sent without their having been previously submitted to His Majesty; that I myself had never acted in any matter of consequence without taking His Majesty's opinion; and that I felt confident His Majesty could not suspect Lord Palmerston, or any member of his Government, of such a breach of duty, as committing His Majesty on any subject of Foreign Policy without authority to do so. His Majesty did not dissent from this, and expressed himself as well satisfied with the conduct, not only of Lord Palmerston but of the other two Secretaries of State; but neither in saying this, nor in the long conversation that followed, was there that expression of cordial feeling which I have heretofore experienced in my communications with His Majesty.

I have served His Majesty to the best of my ability, and it will be my pride and my duty to do so as long as my services are agreeable to His Majesty; but the moment His Majesty ceases to regard them with a favourable eye, I trust that he will, with the frankness which has always marked His Majesty's conduct, signify to me the change which may have taken place in his opinion.

The assiduity with which reports of such a change are circulated is really surprising, partly from things caught from conversation, but still more from invention. I cannot help suspecting that some of those who have access to His Majesty's society assist in propagating these reports. I desired Wood to send you an extract from the 'Standard,' in which His Majesty's altered feelings are alluded to; and for the last two days I have heard nothing but stories of expressions used by His Majesty in his conversations with the Princesses and others, of his being pledged to nothing beyond the second reading of the Bill, and of his being entirely indifferent as to any alterations which may be made in the Committee. It cannot be necessary for me to say that I know all such statements not only to be untrue but to be impossible; but they show the necessity of guarding against even a casual expression, which may be perverted by persons always on the watch for anything that might be represented unfavourably to His Majesty's Government.

The restored confidence of the public by the passing of the second reading will give me much more liberty as to alterations in the Committee; and I am sincerely disposed, for the purpose of conciliation, to adopt any which I can assent to with honour. If the same disposition exists on the part of Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe, I shall have the most sanguine hope of being able to bring this long depending question to a satisfactory termination.

But I have had accounts of communications between Lord Wharncliffe and Lords Lyndhurst and Ellenborough which are calculated to throw some doubt on their good intentions in Committee.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 416.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, April 19, 1832.

My dear Lord,—Although I did not feel quite satisfied, on perusal of your Lordship's letter of yesterday, that you had intended that I should submit it to the King, yet, as it related to recent communications with His Majesty, and to matters of deep interest to him, I did not feel that I should act right or wisely in withholding it from him; nor, indeed, should I have felt comfortable, as I have never concealed from him any thing in which he is concerned, unless its unnecessary disclosure should prove injurious to others. I, therefore, read it to the King, and he received it kindly, as I expected he would, and with an expression of concern, that what has recently passed had left a painful impression upon your mind, and that there had not appeared to you to be, in his conversation with you, that expression of cordial feeling which you had heretofore experienced in your communication with His Majesty. He assured me that he was not sensible of it, and that it was furthest from his intention: indeed, in noticing very shortly on his return yesterday evening what had passed in London, he had told me that all had passed very agreeably, and that he had reason to hope from it and your manner, that his letter of the preceding night had proved satisfactory. He told me also that, as Lord Palmerston had not touched upon the subject, he had not considered it necessary to enter into it with him, aware as he was that he had seen His Majesty's letters to you.

The King proceeded to say that, in expressing his wish to see the instructions to his Ministers at Foreign Courts before they were dispatched, he meant nothing offensive, nor expressive of suspicion: nor did he mean that it should apply to the general course of the communications; but that he could refer Your Lordship and Lord Palmerston to his communications with reference to the Polish and the Italian questions, for proofs of the anxiety with which he contemplates them, and the possibility of their committing this country in a manner, and in the support of interference, and of opinions which he deprecates; and, with this feeling, he has been particularly desirous of preventing the issue of instructions, or the use of expressions, which might not accord with his view of the subject, and which it would be difficult to cancel or recall.

The King is persuaded that there never has been any intention to send instructions of any importance, or upon which it might be conceived that a doubt would arise, without previously submitting them to His Majesty; but there may have been instances in which such doubt has not been anticipated; and, adverting to the date of those addressed to Mr. Seymour, and the day on which received, the King might have presumed that they had been dispatched before they were submitted to him; and yet a perusal of His Majesty's letter respecting these to Lord Palmerston will show that he strongly objected to many parts, as the answer from Lord Palmerston will show that the soundness of many of the objections was admitted. His Majesty flatters himself also that his remarks have been borne out by subsequent occurrences and communications from various quarters, and very recently, since he wrote to you, by the contents of dispatches from Sir Frederick Lamb, which appeared to His Majesty so applicable that he had actually put them into his pocket when he went to London yesterday to show to your Lordship or Lord Palmerston. Again, the King has ordered me to call your attention to his letter to Lord Palmerston, as containing an expression of sentiment and feeling and opinion quite as strong as any conveyed in his letter to you, and to repeat what he has himself said, that such free and unreserved communication appears to him to mark confidence, and to offer the best means of maintaining it.

I cannot drop this subject without noticing the inadvertent introduction of the word 'therefore' in your quotation from the King's letter of the 16th inst., between the words 'more closely with France' and 'to treat,' which has the effect of altering, in some degree, the sense, and of rendering it offensive. Such was, I assure you, not the intention; and I am anxious to remove the impression which this accidental reading of it would naturally raise.

His Majesty is perfectly aware of the assiduity and the malice with which reports of a change of opinion, and others injurious to himself and prejudicial to his Ministers are circulated, and equally aware of the mischievous paragraphs which are introduced into the papers, many of which are too absurd to merit notice or to make any impression, while others are so worded, and accompanied by statements of circumstances made with so much confidence, that it is not surprising they should produce some effect. But His Majesty cannot prevent this, and he believes this evil to have prevailed at all times and under all circumstances more or less. He thinks it more than probable, also, that some of these reports might be traced to individuals occasionally admitted to his society, and that feelings are often expressed by these and even by members of his own families (which your Lordship knows to be much split in opinion and feeling with regard to public men and public questions), which are calculated to produce and encourage the reports to which you allude. But however he may regret and may admit the inconvenience of such a state of things and its consequences, his Majesty cannot prevent them, nor place restrictions on the inventive powers of some of those who may approach him, although he may take good care to give them no ground for their assertions.

I have read to the King the paragraph from the 'Standard' which Mr. Wood sent me, and which I return. His Majesty would be surprised at their impudence, if he had not long since ceased to consider the press (the newspaper family) in any other light than as the vehicle of all that is false and infamous; but the allusion, which is marked, to what occurred between him and your Lordship on a Wednesday (and therefore intended to apply to what may have occurred at St. James's) is remarkable for its palpable want of all foundation, as there has not been any interview in London until yesterday, in which questions occurred which produced much conversation, still less any strong expression of feeling, supposing such to be habitual, or indeed to have ever occurred.

His Majesty mentioned to me with satisfaction what you had said to him with respect to alterations in the Committee, and which your letter to me repeats; and expressed his hope that Lord Wharncliffe's communications with others than yourself, would not disappoint your expectations of a continuance of his and Lord Harrowby's friendly disposition.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

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I have to apologise for this hurried letter, but I wished to save the post, and I had to read it to the King before he dressed.

No. 417.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) East Sheen, April 21, 1832.

My dear Sir,—I have to acknowledge your letters of the 19th and 20th.

My letter of the 18th was perhaps written with more freedom than it should have been, to meet His Majesty's eye; but I cannot regret your having read it to him, and am much comforted by the kind manner in which you say it was received.

I was in town yesterday for a few hours, and saw Lord Palmerston. He had had the communication which I had desired with Lord Wharncliffe, and I am to see him on his return from Newmarket. But I do not augur much good from the interview. Lord Palmerston learnt from him that he, Lord Harrowby, and Lord Haddington, had been in communication with Lords Ellenborough and Lyndhurst, and that what had passed had been reported by the latter to the Duke of Wellington, whose reply had been more favourable than he (Lord W.) had expected. A negotiation of this nature seems hardly compatible with one with me. The Duke of Wellington certainly will consent to nothing that will not be, in effect, a defeat of the former Bill; whilst I, on the other hand, am bound to maintain it, in its essential principles, subject to such alterations as may obviate the objections to its provisions.

I will not recur to the unfortunate effect produced by the misrepresentations which are circulated respecting the language held by the King. But for the impression made in this manner, and by other circumstances, I have little doubt that there would have been such a majority as would have insured the passing of the Bill without much difficulty.

* * * * *

Lord Anglesey returns to Ireland on Wednesday, where his presence cannot be dispensed with for so long a time as would be required for the Committee on the Reform Bill, without great inconvenience, and it would be rather hard to bring him back again. I am, therefore, very anxious to get him a pair for the Committee; and it has occurred to me that a word from the King to Lord Mayo would effect this. He surely could not object to this arrangement, on the ground both of public and personal convenience, if suggested as being wished for by His Majesty. The pair would only be required for the Committee, and in every other stage of the Bill, and on every other subject, Proxies may be admitted.

* * * * *

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 418.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, April 22, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have read your Lordship's letter of yesterday to the King, who was glad to learn that Lord Palmerston had had the desired communication with Lord Wharncliffe, and will be anxious to hear what passes between you and him on his return from Newmarket. His Majesty is sensible of the difficulty of bringing the Duke of Wellington to acquiesce in many provisions of the present Bill; but he does not despair of his being influenced by a consideration of existing circumstances and contingencies, nor of satisfactory results from this sort of communication before the House meets again. At any rate it is attended with much less embarrassment now than before the second reading had passed.

The King said he would try what he could do with Lord Mayo as to his pairing with Lord Anglesey.

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Lord Anglesey has been with the King this day, and staid some time, but I have not seen His Majesty since his interview.

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Their Majesties are going to-morrow to the opening of the new bridge at Staines, and on Wednesday there will be a family party in the King's house at Kew. I shall endeavour to escape both.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 419.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) East Sheen, April 29, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I received your letter of the 27th on my return from town yesterday evening. I had been there for a few hours to meet Lord Wharncliffe.

The interview took place at Lord Palmerston's, Lord Palmerston and the Chancellor being present. There was nobody with Lord Wharncliffe. Our conversation was conciliatory and friendly, but did not lead to any distinct result. The matter remains therefore open for future communication, with respect to the issue of which I confess my hopes are not very sanguine.

I am not aware that it is necessary for me to say more at present with respect to our Foreign Policy. With relation to Poland, I had already stated to His Majesty, that it did not appear to me that this Government was required, or that it would be expedient, to add anything to the representations which have already been addressed, in a friendly tone, to the Court of St. Petersburg. In these, I do not recollect any circumstance which indicated any concert with France, though the two Governments, taking the same view of the case, may have adopted a similar line of conduct; and His Majesty must recollect that when, during the Polish War, a joint representation was proposed to us by France, it was declined by this Government, much to the satisfaction, as was stated at the time, of Russia. In all these proceedings I cannot refer to anything which could afford just ground of suspicion to Austria and Prussia. Had the conduct of these Governments been such as we had a right to expect, particularly as to the affairs of Belgium, much of the difficulty which still exists would have been avoided.

The state of Monsieur Perrier seems to render some change in the French Administration almost inevitable. I trust it will not be one less favourable to the peace of Europe; but the danger, which is still to be apprehended in that respect, would certainly have been much diminished, whatever may be the character of the new Government in France, if the question, yet in a state of uncertainty between Belgium and Holland, had been brought to a conclusion.

I intend to establish myself in town on Wednesday. I have not profited, as much as I expected, by the short interval of repose that has been allowed me, and dread the fatigue of the Committee.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 420.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, May 1, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have had the honour to receive your Lordship's letters of the 29th ult. and yesterday, and to submit them to the King.

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His Majesty has learnt from your Lordship's letter only, that the Russian Ratification had actually left St. Petersburg on the 18th April; but he has this morning read Lord Heytesbury's dispatches, which state the Emperor's consent to ratify, and those from Mr. Chad to the same effect; and the seemingly reluctant and ungracious manner in which this tardy act was performed, as well as the nature of the communication from Berlin to Petersburg (which was pleaded as a ground for fresh hesitation), appear to His Majesty well calculated to confirm his previous impression, that those Cabinets have been playing anything but a straightforward game, and that the ostentatious display of frankness and decision in Count Orloff's mission was adopted to cover the desire of gaining time, and of retarding, rather than advancing, the conclusion of the negotiation.

But, in other respects, the language held at St. Petersburg tends to confirm His Majesty's belief, that its policy has of late been considerably influenced by the apprehension of a concert of measures between England and France; and that this apprehension, and the encouragement artfully given by France to the suspicion that the English Government is disposed to favour its system and policy, have had the effect of rousing the jealousy of the Northern Powers, and of cementing their union, with respect even to objects upon which a difference of opinions and views might otherwise have arisen.

His Majesty orders me to observe that, upon full consideration of the correspondence which has lately passed, he is satisfied that he and your Lordship take decidedly the same view of the interests of this country, and of what ought to be its policy in Foreign concerns; and that the only difference is, that you are not disposed to go the length that His Majesty goes in mistrusting France, under whatever rule it may be placed.

Upon this point the King admits that he entertains a prejudice, so rooted, that he cannot help seeking for an *arrière pensée* in every assertion and every measure of the French Government, or thinking that it is often betrayed. His Majesty feels deeply the blessings of peace, the necessity of maintaining it; and is, therefore, quite willing to encourage and to receive as coin, every overture and every protestation which can have the effect of keeping this country upon good terms with France; but he attaches no value to their sincerity; and he believes that their friendly policy will last so long only, as they shall cease to apprehend that a departure from it, would produce a combination of England with the Northern Powers against them. His Majesty is convinced that they have not, at any time, given up the plan of recovering possession of Belgium and of re-extending their frontier to the Rhine, and that these are objects borne constantly in view, and deferred only because the union against their ambitious projects is of too recent a date, and would still prove too powerful. They therefore endeavour to attain them by disturbing the order of things established in other States, and by exciting jealousy and suspicion among those who *had* been united against them.

The King admits that their conduct in the Belgic question has latterly been steady and correct, and in accordance with the engagements mutually contracted; but he doubts if it would have been so if the Northern Courts had not swerved, and thus enabled France to place England and France in opposition to them on this point. Nay, His Majesty cannot divest himself of the suspicion that there has been, and is still, some secret understanding between some members of the French Government and the King of Holland, with respect to a future settlement of the Belgic question; and he has felt inclined to ascribe to this cause much of that Sovereign's conduct, which would otherwise seem inexplicable, and even what has lately occurred in Luxemburg, for it could not have resulted from communication with Petersburg; and although the proceedings of the Prussian Commandant of Luxemburg appear equivocal, it can hardly be supposed that the Court of Berlin would have sanctioned them in the same breath in which she authorised her Minister here to exchange the ratifications. It has also been stated in a letter from Paris, that there exists in the recent treaty between France and America a separate and secret article directed against England, and His Majesty does not disbelieve it. The King expressed an earnest desire that I should put your Lordship in full possession of his feeling with respect to France, to account for the manner in which he has occasionally expressed it; but His Majesty desires you will believe that it does not lead him to the extent of wishing to encourage or support the arbitrary measures of a 'Holy Alliance.' He objects to that extreme almost as much as he does to what he conceives to be the French system, although he believes the latter to be far more at variance with the interests of this country, and more fraught with destruction to social order, than the declared ends of the Holy Alliance.

Finally, His Majesty considers that England, from its position, its power and influence, and the character of its institutions and constitution, may act as a *moderator* between these contending feelings and principles, and that we may hold the balance, so long as we do not show too great a leaning to either party.

I have troubled your Lordship with a long letter on those points, but I could not express His Majesty's sentiments in fewer words; and I felt the importance of explaining them, lest former communications should have led to misconceptions.

I shall accompany the King to town to-morrow, and hope to have the pleasure of seeing you during our three days' stay; but I regret to hear that you have not profited more by your short interval of repose.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 421.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) St. Katharine's, May 2, 1832. 11 P.M.

My dear Lord,—The box containing your Lordship's letter of this day,* and those from Hanover, which I had sent to Lord Palmerston, and which he had forwarded to you, was taken to the King, who arrived at St. James's before I did, and who opened it, and read your letter.

His Majesty has ordered me to assure your Lordship that he is very sensible of the necessity of extreme caution with respect to any reference to the great question pending with the East India Company, that he admits its great difficulty and importance, and that you may feel quite at your ease as to his avoiding any allusion to it on Friday next, in any thing he may say at dinner.

The King is, however, obliged to you for having suggested the expediency of saying nothing that can give rise to speculation and discussion, and glad at the same time to take this opportunity of stating that there is one point connected with the general question of the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company upon which his opinion is fixed, and that is, the China trade; to the throwing open of which his objection is, and will continue, insurmountable.

His Majesty enters into your Lordship's views and Lord Palmerston's with regard to the necessity of securing to Belgium, and in fact to this country, a free passage to the Rhine, and a trade uncontrolled by the Prussian exclusive system; and you will have observed that the letter from the Duke of Cambridge and its enclosures are in reply to communications which I made to His Royal Highness, by His Majesty's order.

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* Missing.

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I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

P.S.—The King has ordered me to send your Lordship a letter from Sir M. Tierney's brother, parts of which appear to him deserving of your perusal.

No. 422.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, May 3, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I have this moment received your letter, with the accompanying enclosure from Sir M. Tierney's brother. There can be no doubt of the dangerous character and wicked designs of many of the leading Catholic agitators: but I am sorry to be obliged to add, that their influence over the minds of the people is greatly assisted and increased by the no less violent and objectionable proceedings of the Orangemen on the other side. The situation in which the Government is placed between the contending parties is difficult and embarrassing to the highest degree; but I trust these difficulties will be surmounted by the firmness and vigour of Lord Anglesey's Government.

I trust His Majesty will make the necessary allowance for the freedom of a letter which was not intended to meet his eye, but in which there was not a sentiment expressed which was not dictated by a sincere attachment to His Majesty's person. The point respecting which you state His Majesty to have made up his mind in relation to the renewal of the East India Charter is one of very great importance, and certainly requires the most careful consideration. I do not pretend to anticipate the advice which His Majesty's servants may eventually find it their duty to submit to His Majesty on this subject, as it has not yet been brought under their consideration; and I do not feel that I am yet possessed of sufficient information to offer a decided opinion upon it; but I assure myself that His Majesty will not be indisposed to receive with his usual indulgence, when the time comes, the views which His Majesty's servants may find it their duty to lay before Him.

I shall be anxious to see His Majesty to-morrow, if he is pleased to allow me that honour, at any hour that he will have the goodness to appoint, of which I shall be much obliged to you to inform me. I do not propose waiting on him to-day on account of the drawing-room.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 423.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, May 7, 1832.

My dear Sir,—This accompanies the very painful communication which I have to make to His Majesty of the result of to-night's debate and division.*

The whole plan was evidently concocted by Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe, with Lords Lyndhurst and Ellenborough, and I have no doubt sanctioned by the Duke of Wellington, though I do not see how it is possible for his Grace to consent to the plan of Reform announced to the House after the division by Lord Ellenborough.

He stated that it would be the object of his amendments to add to the great towns and counties 113 members, to be made way for by a disfranchisement with Weymouth nearly equal to Schedule A., but to put an end altogether to Schedule B. and Schedule D. The 10*l.* franchise he meant to preserve, but objected to its uniformity, which he meant to correct by retaining all the present *scot and lot* boroughs. He took care not to let his plan be known to the House before the division, which would, I believe, have been very different if it had been previously announced. I make no remark on this proceeding, or on the conduct of Lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe in concerting it after their communication with me, and without giving me any notice of it.

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* Lord Lyndhurst had moved in the Committee on the Reform Bill, that the clause disfranchising the boroughs enumerated in the Schedule A. attached to the Bill should be postponed; and this motion had been carried against the Government by a majority of 151 to 116.

The only point we shall have to consider to-morrow would be whether we should propose a creation of Peers, or at once tender our resignations to His Majesty. I will send a messenger as soon as the Cabinet breaks up, and perhaps His Majesty will allow me the honour of a personal communication with him as soon afterwards as may be convenient to His Majesty.

The *Bishop of Worcester* and the Archbishop of York voted against us: four Bishops for, viz. London, St. David's, Chester, and Chichester. I am quite knocked up.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 424.

Earl Grey to the King.

Downing Street, May 7, 1832. 12 P.M.

Earl Grey has the honour of enclosing for your Majesty's information a list of the Peers present, of the speakers in the debate, and the numbers of the division on the motion of Lord Lyndhurst for postponing the clauses of disfranchisement.

A Cabinet is summoned for to-morrow at eleven, to consider the situation in which your Majesty's Government is placed by so large a majority having voted against them, the result of which Earl Grey will have the honour of communicating to your Majesty.

All which, &c. GREY.

No. 425.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, May 8, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have read to the King the letter your Lordship addressed to me, with the report of last night's debate in the House of Lords. It is, indeed, a painful communication, and I own that it has surprised me as much as it has distressed me. The King has ordered me not to delay sending back your messenger, and I will therefore now only add, that I shall not be out of the way this afternoon in case you should come here.

The King is quite alive to the importance of what you may have to submit to him.

I have, &c. H. Taylor.

No. 426.

The King to Earl Grey.

Windsor Castle, May 8, 1832. 9·45 A.M.

The King has received, with very sincere concern, Earl Grey's communication of the proceedings in the House of Lords last night on Lord Lyndhurst's motion for postponing the clauses of disfranchisement, and of so large a majority against his Ministers. His Majesty cannot disguise from himself the serious and embarrassing position in which his Government is placed by this event, and will await Earl Grey's further communication with great anxiety. His Majesty will be prepared to receive Earl Grey at any hour in the course of this day. William R.

No. 427.

Minute of Cabinet.

Foreign Office, May 8, 1832.

PRESENT:

The Lord Chancellor,
The Lord President,
The Lord Privy Seal,
The Duke of Richmond,
The Earl Grey,
The Viscount Melbourne,
The Viscount Goderich,
The Viscount Palmerston,
The Lord Holland,
The Lord John Russell,
The Viscount Althorp,
Sir James Graham,
The Rt. Hon. E. G. Stanley,
The Rt. Hon. C. Grant.

Your Majesty's servants having been assembled to consider the situation in which they are placed by the vote of the Committee of the House of Lords last night, beg leave humbly to represent to your Majesty, that they find themselves deprived of all hope of being able to carry the Reform Bill through its further stages in a manner that would be for the advantage of your Majesty's Government, or satisfactory to the public.

So circumstanced, your Majesty's servants would naturally be led at once to tender to your Majesty, with every sentiment of respect and gratitude, the resignation of the offices which they hold from your Majesty's favour, if they did not feel it to be a paramount duty, not to withdraw themselves from your Majesty's service in a moment of so much difficulty, so long as they can contemplate the possibility of remaining in it with advantage to your Majesty and to the public interests, and without dishonour to themselves.

They, therefore, feel themselves bound humbly to suggest to your Majesty the expediency of advancing to the honour of the Peerage such a number of persons as might insure the success of the Bill in all its essential principles, and as might give to your Majesty's servants the strength which is necessary for conducting with effect the business of the country.

In the opinion thus humbly submitted to your Majesty the Duke of Richmond alone of your Majesty's servants does not coincide.

All which, &c.

No. 428.

The King to Earl Grey.

Windsor Castle, May 9, 1832.

It is not without the truest concern that the King acquaints his confidential servants that, after giving due consideration to the Minute of Cabinet which was brought to him yesterday afternoon by Earl Grey and the Lord Chancellor, and to the consequences of the alternative which it offers for his decision, of being deprived of the benefit of their further services, or of sanctioning the advancement to the Peerage of a sufficient number of persons to insure the success of the Reform Bill in all the principles which they consider essential, His Majesty has come to the painful resolution of accepting their resignations.

The King assures Earl Grey and his colleagues, that his sense of the value of their services, and of the zeal, ability, and integrity with which they have discharged their duties at a period and under circumstances of extreme difficulty, is unimpaired and undiminished; but His Majesty cannot reconcile it to what he considers to be his duty, and to be the principles which should govern him in the exercise of the prerogative which the constitution of this country has entrusted to him, to consent to so large an addition to the Peerage as that which has been mentioned to him by Earl Grey and the Chancellor to be necessary towards insuring the success of the Reform Bill in the House of Lords.

His Majesty has received too many proofs of the attachment and devotion of his confidential servants not to rely with confidence upon their readiness to comply with his request, that they will respectively continue in the discharge of their official functions until he shall be enabled to make due arrangement for the public service, and that they will thus relieve him from the immediate difficulty in which he is placed, by an event for which he was altogether unprepared.

WILLIAM R.

No. 429.

The King to Earl Grey.

Windsor Castle, May 9, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I cannot answer the Minute of Cabinet which you left with me yesterday afternoon, without expressing to you, individually, the sincere and heartfelt regret with which I have made up my mind to an alternative which must have the effect of depriving me of your valuable services, and of interrupting that intercourse from which I have derived so much satisfaction.

You will, I trust, feel assured that I shall, at all times, and under any circumstances, retain a grateful sense of the exemplary manner in which you have discharged the arduous duties of the important situation to which I called you at a very critical period, and that I shall not cease to take a warm interest in your welfare and happiness and in that of your family.

I have derived great satisfaction from the recent opportunity of advancing your deserving brother to the See of Hereford, and I cannot allow you to retire from your official situation without giving effect to the promises conveyed through you to Lord Francis Osborne and Mr. Dundas, that they should be promoted to the Peerage. I have, therefore, to desire that their patents may be immediately made out and transmitted for my signature; and I desire that you will direct a patent to be made out and transmitted at the same time, creating my son-in-law, Viscount Falkland, a Baron of the United Kingdom, by the title of Baron Hunsdon.

I am, my dear Lord, yours very sincerely,

William R.

No. 430.

Earl Grey to the King.

Downing Street, May 9, 1832.

Sir,—I cannot wait for the meeting of the Cabinet, which is to assemble at 12 o'clock, upon your Majesty's answer to their Minute of yesterday, to offer to your Majesty my respectful and heartfelt thanks, for the most kind and gracious letter with which that answer was accompanied.

In retiring from your Majesty's service, the best consolation I can have, in the cessation of the confidential intercourse which it has been my happiness to enjoy during the period in which I have been in your Majesty's councils, is derived from your Majesty's most gratifying assurance, that my zeal for your Majesty's interests, and my earnest desire to promote the welfare of your people, have been so favourably appreciated by your Majesty. Whether in or out of office, I beg your Majesty to be assured, that my conduct will be governed by the same feelings; and that my most anxious wish and endeavour, in the discharge of my public duty, will be to diminish as much as possible any personal embarrassment and difficulty to which, in the present unfortunate state of public affairs, your Majesty may be exposed; and for this purpose your Majesty may rely on the continued efforts of all your Majesty's servants, during the interval which may be required for the formation of a new Government, for the advancement of your Majesty's service, as far as such a provisional state of things will permit.

For the numerous marks of favour, so far beyond any personal merits which I can claim, which it has been at once my happiness and my pride to receive from your Majesty, I beg to offer to your Majesty my humble but sincere thanks. They have imposed upon me a debt of gratitude which never can be cancelled. More particularly, I feel myself called upon to offer to your Majesty my humble acknowledgments for the promotion of my brother to the See of Hereford; an act not more valuable for the dignity which it conferred, than from the peculiar graciousness with which it was distinguished.

My thanks are also due for your Majesty's kind remembrance of the promises which your Majesty had authorised me to make to Lord Francis Osborne and to Mr. Dundas, of your Majesty's consent to their being advanced to the dignity of the Peerage; and I shall have great satisfaction in sending, conformably to your Majesty's commands, the necessary instructions to the Home Office, to get patents prepared for this purpose, as well as for creating Viscount Falkland a Baron of the United Kingdom by the title of Baron Hunsdon. These assurances of respect and gratitude I hope to be allowed the honour of repeating to your Majesty in person at the levee, and remain, with every sentiment of duty and the sincerest devotion, Sir, your Majesty's most grateful and most faithful subject and servant,

GREY.

No. 431.

The King to Earl Grey.

Windsor Castle, May 9, 1832.

The King omitted, when he saw Earl Grey yesterday and afterwards wrote to him, to intimate to him his pleasure that his brother, the Bishop of Hereford, should retain with that See the living of St. Botolph, Bishopsgate. His Majesty is anxious not further to delay a communication which he hopes may prove satisfactory to Earl Grey, persuaded as he is that, under all circumstances, no reasonable objection can be made to this arrangement.

WILLIAM R.

No. 432.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, May 10, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I should have wished to see you yesterday after the very distressing interview which I had with the King, had I not thought that it would be an unseasonable and inconvenient occupation of your time, at a moment when your business must necessarily be so much increased.

I never can forget all the kindness and condescension of His Majesty in this conversation. My feelings were soothed and gratified by the marked expression of His Majesty's personal regard; but it was painful to see His Majesty so deeply affected, at the same time that I could not help contemplating, with the greatest anxiety and apprehension, the difficulties and dangers which the present state of affairs may produce. Symptoms of no equivocal nature are already presenting themselves of the strong excitement in the country. This, you may be assured, it will be my endeavour to allay as much as possible; but I have little reason to hope, that any means I can use will be successful for this purpose. In the House of Commons, too, a feeling prevails which we have no power of controlling. It is in vain that it has been represented both by Lord Althorp and myself, that nothing could be more unpleasant to us personally, than any proceeding which might tend to throw difficulties in the way of the formation of a new Administration. Lord Ebrington felt himself compelled to give notice of the motion, which stands for to-day; and the appeal made to him by Lord Althorp, on giving this notice, only produced a strong expression from many Members of the House that, under the present circumstances, it was absolutely necessary that it should be persevered in. The motion itself, I am assured, is temperate in expression, and is of a nature which makes it impossible for His Majesty's Ministers not to vote for it when it is brought forward. They all feel equal regret at not having had it in their power to prevent it. I trust, however, that the debate will be conducted with moderation. It will be so, I am assured, by my colleagues, though the very injudicious and inconsiderate manner in which further disclosures as to what has passed on the subject of creating Peers have been pressed for by Sir R. Peel and Mr. A. Baring are extremely to be lamented, and may produce mischievous effects.

I was interrupted here by Lord Duncannon, who assures me that Lord Ebrington's motion was unavoidable, and that the consequence of his not making it would have been its being taken up with more violence by some other person, whose views are not governed by a desire to preserve the tranquillity of the country. Ellice confirms this opinion. He has made the arrangements which you desired with respect to the distribution of the Royal Bounty, respecting which he will write to you to-night; and he will also send you an account of what passes in the debate in the House of Commons.

I shall have to write to you to-morrow about pensions, and some other matters, which I wish to have arranged before I leave office. That period, I hope, will not be long delayed. I do not wish to press His Majesty in a work of so much difficulty as forming at present a new Administration, but the state of this country and of the world requires that the state of provisional government in which we now are should not be prolonged. I conclude you will soon be coming to make some stay in town, when I shall hope to have the pleasure of seeing you, and of repeating in person the satisfaction and comfort which I have derived from the free and confidential intercourse with you which I have had the advantage of enjoying.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 433.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, May 11, 1832. 12·30 P.M.

My dear Lord, — In consequence of pressure of business and continued interruptions it has not been in my power, until this moment, to thank your Lordship for your very kind letter of yesterday, and to assure you how grateful I feel, not only for your attention to my communications in favour of various individuals, respecting whom Ellice has written to me, but also for the kindness of your expressions towards me, and for the continued proofs of friendship and confidence which I have had the satisfaction of receiving from you during the intercourse which I have had the honour of holding with you. The manner in which you have communicated with me has been truly gratifying to my feelings, and it has been my anxious study to merit it by an honest and correct discharge of my duty. I was convinced, indeed, that this course would best obtain and secure to me the good opinion of an individual for whose character I entertained the highest respect, and whose honourable proceedings have left an impression on my mind which neither time nor circumstances can weaken. You will, I hope, acquit me of presumption in expressing an opinion which would not derive much weight from my station in life, but the manner in which I have been employed has offered to me the opportunities of appreciating the value of honourable and gentlemanly dealing.

Your Lordship does the King justice in giving him credit for warm personal regard towards you, and for an affectionate sense of the zeal, attachment, and devotion with which you have served him. The circumstances which have led to your retirement from his councils have been the occasion of regret and concern which he has strongly expressed; and it is impossible that this feeling should not be accompanied by some uneasiness as to the difficulties and embarrassments with which His Majesty may have to contend.

But His Majesty's disposition leads him to struggle with difficulty, to meet it boldly rather than to yield to apprehension; and, whatever may be the dangers which the present state of affairs, or the spirit of the times, may produce, I am convinced that His Majesty will not be found wanting in the determination to uphold the station in which Providence has placed him, and to merit the support of those who may aid and assist him. Among these I am certain that His Majesty may continue to reckon your Lordship and others who have retired from his councils, although your views and opinions may not in many respects accord with those which His Majesty may hereafter adopt.

The King is very sensible of the endeavours which your Lordship and Lord Althorp and others have used to prevent proceedings in the House of Commons which might tend to throw difficulties in the way of the formation of a new Administration, and he readily conceives that they must have been personally unpleasant to you; but His Majesty has not been surprised at the course pursued on this occasion, and is quite prepared for further steps of the same character.

The King goes to St. James's to-morrow, and will probably stay at least a week, during which I hope to have the satisfaction of seeing you. The arrangements for relieving you from official duties will, I hope, not be long delayed, both on your own account and as I am very sensible how desirable it is not to prolong the state of provisional government in which we now are.

I have, &c. H. Taylor.

No. 434.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, May 12, 1832.

Dear Sir Herbert,—I have this morning received your very kind letter, for which I beg you will accept my best thanks.

The King will probably have told you that I felt myself compelled to decline His Majesty's most gracious offer, that my brother should continue to hold, with the

See of Hereford, the living of St. Botolph, Bishopsgate; and that I had recommended the Rev. Dr. Russell, the master of the Charterhouse, to succeed to that living. Of this His Majesty was pleased to approve, and ordered me to give the necessary directions.

I have since seen the Bishop of London, who has repeated to me, in the strongest terms, what he had said before, that there could not be a person better qualified for the superintendence of a large and important parish in the metropolis than Dr. Russell. I have, therefore, sent the necessary directions to the Home Office, which may remain there as a record of my intentions as sanctioned by the King, if the new Government should be appointed before the vacancy in the living can be completed by the confirmation of my brother in the See of Hereford.

I enclose a list of the pensions which have been granted since I came into office, and of those which, as cases of very great and urgent distress, I should wish to be granted, if His Majesty approves of it, out of the balance which now remains available on this account.

* * * * *

I shall be most happy to have half an hour's conversation with you whenever and wherever it may best suit you, but perhaps my being seen going to the Palace at this moment might give rise to more reports, and they are already sufficiently abundant.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 435.

The King to Earl Grey

St. James's Palace, May 15, 1832.

In consequence of what passed last night in the House of Commons, as it has been reported to the King, His Majesty is induced to communicate to Earl Grey his hope and expectation that the difficulties which have arisen may be removed, without resorting to any change of Administration, by passing the Bill with such modifications as may meet the views of those who may still entertain any difference of opinion upon the subject, and as may not be inconsistent with the intentions upon various occasions expressed by Earl Grey to His Majesty.

An arrangement to this effect would relieve the King from the embarrassment under which he has been placed by the proposal to make so extensive a creation of Peers for the purpose of passing the Reform Bill, and would be highly satisfactory to His Majesty.*

WILLIAM R.

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* In explanation of this letter it may be convenient to state shortly what had occurred after the advice to create Peers had been rejected by the King. On the 9th of May, both Houses were informed that the Ministers had resigned, and that their resignation had been accepted. On the 10th, Lord Ebrington moved in the House of Commons an address to the King, which concluded by praying His Majesty to call to his councils only such persons as would carry into effect, unimpaired in any of its essential provisions, the Bill for the Reform of the Representation of the People, which had recently passed that House. This address was carried by a majority of eighty, the numbers being 288 to 208. In the course of the following day it became known that, in order to overcome the difficulty thrown in their way by the above vote, the leaders of the Opposition were endea-

No. 436.

Earl Grey to the King

Downing Street, May. 15, 1832.

Earl Grey presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and has the honour of acknowledging your Majesty's most gracious letter of this day.

vouring to form a new Administration, composed of the persons who had taken the strongest part against the Reform Bill, but who were now to undertake to carry it without changes by which it would be seriously impaired. It was reported (as it afterwards appeared correctly) that Sir R. Peel had declined to assume the conduct of an Administration formed on this principle, but that the task had been undertaken by the Duke of Wellington, under whom it was supposed that the Speaker and Mr. Alexander Baring (afterwards Lord Ashburton) were to hold the chief ministerial offices in the House of Commons. The belief that such an arrangement was in progress excited extreme indignation in the country; and on the evening of Monday, the 14th of May, a debate in the House of Commons on the presentation of a petition from the City of London, praying the House to withhold the supplies till the Reform Bill should have passed into a law, afforded an opportunity for expressing the same feeling. Lord Ebrington (the late Lord Fortescue) and Lord Milton (the late Lord Fitzwilliam) were among those who most severely condemned the course which it was supposed those who had hitherto been the bitter opponents of the Bill were about to take; Lord Milton declaring that if the Duke of Wellington, after his speech on the second reading, and the protest he had recorded against it, were now to form an Administration on the principle of passing the Bill, it would 'be an act of public immorality.' In the early part of the evening Sir H. Hardinge and Mr. A. Baring spoke as organs of their party, in a manner which confirmed the belief that they were to become members of the new Ministry (though they denied having accepted office), and endeavoured to defend the conduct of the Opposition, or rather to plead for a suspension of the judgment of the House, until the King had the means of being constitutionally heard in it. Their excuses were received with the utmost impatience, indeed almost with insult, especially after the House had been told by Mr. T. Duncombe, that he had within a few minutes heard a declaration made by Lord Carnarvon in another place, 'that the

He begs, in the first place, to repeat to your Majesty the assurance of his unabated zeal for your Majesty's service, to promote which no efforts on his part which can be made consistently with his character and honour will be wanting.

But your Majesty must be aware of the increased difficulties which, after what has happened, oppose themselves to any modifications of the Bill except such as may be proposed with a view to the improvement of its subordinate details. Any change of its principles or essential provisions it would be impossible for Earl Grey to propose.

Earl Grey has thought it his duty not to delay communicating to your Majesty the impression made on him by the first reading of your Majesty's letter, to which he could not give a full and explicit answer

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new Administration was formed except in some of its minor points.' As the debate went on, the attacks on the proposed new Government became more and more vehement, and the favour with which they were received more obvious, while a defence was scarcely attempted. The feeling thus displayed by the House became quite overwhelming when Sir Robert Inglis rose, and in very measured but very decided language condemned the project of transferring the conduct of the Reform Bill into the hands of its enemies, and said that if the Bill (to which he retained all his objections) was to be carried, it ought to be so by the Ministers who had proposed it. This storm was more than the Opposition leaders could face, and at length Mr. Baring, after communicating (as it was supposed) with the chiefs of his party in the other House, got up and suggested that the breach between the King and his Ministers might not be irreparable, and that they might withdraw their advice to create a large number of Peers if an assurance were given them, or there were a reasonable probability, that the House of Peers did really intend to pass Schedule A. This was understood to imply an offer, on the part of the Opposition, to allow the Bill to pass, provided Peers were not created, and it is to this the King refers.

without consulting his colleagues, whom he has summoned to meet with as little delay as possible.

All which, &c. GREY.

No. 437.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, May 15, 1832.

Dear Sir Herbert,—I enclose my answer to the King's letter, upon which it will be my duty to consult my colleagues. I have summoned a Cabinet to meet immediately.

You cannot but perceive the difficulties which must embarrass such a negotiation as this letter seems to propose. Indeed, things have been brought to a state in which I do not now see the possibility of anything less than the whole Bill. God knows how much I desire to relieve the King from all the difficulties into which we have all been brought by the conduct of the opposers of the Bill, and by the false impressions created by those who have availed themselves, with too little good faith, of the opportunities given them by their admission to His Majesty's society; but the circumstances are so changed, that many things which might have been done before this crisis took place, are now altogether impossible. The Cabinet are assembling, and I must conclude.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 438.

Earl Grey to the King.

Downing Street, May 15, 1832.

Earl Grey having laid before his colleagues your Majesty's most gracious letter of this day, has now the honour of humbly submitting to your Majesty the opinion in which they have unanimously concurred.

Adverting to the present state of the country, it appears to them that they cannot recommend to your Majesty any course as safe, which would not have the effect of speedily passing the Reform Bill in such a shape as would satisfy the just expectations of the public, and put an end to the agitation which now prevails. This is rendered more than ever necessary by the effect produced by the knowledge, that the resignation of your Majesty's present Ministers had been accepted, and that the Duke of Wellington had been commissioned to form a new Administration, and had failed in the execution of that task.

In these circumstances, after full consideration, and with the most anxious desire to act for the advantage of your Majesty's service, Earl Grey is instructed to submit to your Majesty the conviction, to which he and his colleagues have been brought, that they could not continue in their present situations usefully to your Majesty or honourably to themselves, except with a sufficient security that they will possess the power of passing the present Bill, unimpaired in its principles and its essential provisions, and as nearly as possible in its present form.

It is most painful to Earl Grey to press upon your Majesty any thing to which he has reason to believe that your Majesty's opinions are adverse, but he is under the necessity of adding, with the unanimous concurrence of his colleagues, that it appears indispensable, if it should be your Majesty's pleasure to continue them in their present offices, that they should have your Majesty's consent to a creation of Peers, if it should be required to give additional strength to your Majesty's Government in the House of Lords.

Earl Grey will be ready to obey your Majesty's commands, if it should be your Majesty's pleasure that he should wait upon your Majesty, to give any further explanations, in person, which your Majesty may require.

Earl Grey has to apologise to your Majesty for the inaccuracies which he has not been able to correct by writing this letter over again, not having time to do so before he goes to the House of Lords, and being anxious that your Majesty should receive this communication with the least possible delay.

All which, &c. GREY.

No. 430.

The King to Earl Grey.

St. James's Palace, May 15, 1832.

The King has received Earl Grey's letter of this day, communicating to him the opinion, in which his colleagues have unanimously concurred, after consideration of His Majesty's letter.

His Majesty is sensible of the validity of their observation, that 'they cannot recommend to His Majesty any course as safe, which would not have the effect of speedily passing the Reform Bill in such a shape as would satisfy the just expectations of the public, and put an end to the agitation which now prevails.' He admits that, after all that has passed, he cannot require them to continue in their present situations, except with a 'sufficient security that they will possess the power of passing the present Bill unimpaired in its principles and its essential provisions, and as nearly as possible in its present form;' and His Majesty has upon this point to remark to Earl Grey, that when, in his letter of this day, he adverted to modifications which might be satisfactory to others, he adverted to them also as being such as would be consistent with the intentions which Earl Grey had upon various occasions expressed to His Majesty.

It is indeed hardly necessary for the King to remind Earl Grey and his colleagues, and to refer them to the voluminous and anxious correspondence which has passed since the beginning of the month of February, 1831, but more particularly since the beginning of January last, for a confirmation of this observation, that His Majesty's opposition (whatever may have been his objections) has not been to the principles and the essential provisions of the Reform Bill. To that Bill, as submitted to him by Earl Grey on the 31st January, 1831, the King gave his general assent; nor has it at any time been withdrawn, although he has repeatedly urged the propriety of introducing such modifications as, without impairing the principle and the efficiency of the Bill, might remove objections reasonably entertained and advanced, and, above all, weaken the opposition in the House of Lords, and prevent that collision between the two Houses, which he had early apprehended from the introduction of a measure which Earl Grey had himself, more than once, characterised as 'perilous;' nor had His Majesty omitted to convey to them his opinion, that they would find the opposition in the Lords more formidable and more persevering than they had felt disposed to anticipate. All this was more particularly and most earnestly pressed upon them by His Majesty immediately after he had sanctioned the dissolution of Parliament in April, 1831, when he flattered himself he could do it with best effect, having by that act unequivocally evinced his determination to support them in the prosecution of the measure.

At that period however, notwithstanding His Majesty's warning as to the extent of the opposition to be apprehended in the House of Lords, not a word was said as to the necessity of creating Peers; nor, in fact, was any direct communication on *this* subject made to the King until January last, when it was introduced to him by Earl Grey at Brighton.

Without entering here into the detail of what passed, or adverting to the rapid 'growth' of the proposal then made to His Majesty, he will advert briefly to the extreme repugnance with which he consented to it, to his objections to the increase suggested, and to the anxiety with which he endeavoured to avert the 'dreaded evil.'

His Majesty must feel less hesitation in making this reference to those circumstances, as he cannot forget the satisfaction and the confidence which he derived from Earl Grey's repeated assurances that he participated in the King's aversion to a creation of Peers for such a purpose, that he considered it a measure of extreme violence, and for which there was no precedent.

His Majesty repeats, his opposition was not to the Reform Bill, its essential principles or provisions; it was to the proposed creation of Peers. But he did not persist in that opposition; he yielded, rather than risk the continuance of agitation in the country, and the change of men and measures, both, in his opinion, alike injurious to its interests. 'He relied upon the moderation and the discretion of those forming the Administration, not to place him in a position in which the alternative should cease 'to be a matter of option;' and he consented to an addition to the House of Lords, and to His Ministers 'having that resource in reserve, to be applied, however, as had been stipulated, subject to His Majesty's consideration as to the nature and the extent of the addition.'

In consequence of the division upon Lord Lyndhurst's motion on the 7th inst., His Majesty's confidential servants submitted to Him, in a Minute of Cabinet which Earl Grey and the Lord Chancellor brought to His Majesty in person, the alternative of their resignations, or of a creation of Peers sufficiently extensive to insure the success of the Bill in all its essential principles, and to give to His Majesty's servants the strength necessary for conducting with effect the business of the country; and His Majesty replied on the following day, that he must adopt the painful alternative of accepting their resignations, as he could not reconcile it to his duty, and to the principle which should govern the exercise of the prerogative which the Constitution of this country had entrusted to him, to sanction *so large an addition* to the Peerage as that which Lord Grey and Lord Brougham had mentioned to him would be required.

Earl Grey will recollect that he told His Majesty that they contemplated not less a number than fifty; that he admitted that even this number might prove insufficient; that he and Lord Brougham agreed that His Majesty had *never* encouraged them to expect that he would consent to so extensive a creation. His Majesty has been induced to make this reference to some of the past transactions, because he is aware that gross misrepresentations of his conduct have gone abroad, that he has been accused of having betrayed his Ministers, and of having forfeited his pledge to them, and because these calumnies have not as yet received any sufficient or due contradiction.

When the King adopted the painful alternative of accepting the resignations of Earl Grey and his colleagues, he stated that he was altogether unprepared for the event; and what has since passed must have convinced those who were then disposed to question the correctness of that assertion of its accuracy. His Majesty, therefore, naturally anticipated great difficulties; but he admits that they have greatly exceeded his expectations; nor does he deny that the failure in the attempt to form a new Administration induced him to take advantage of what passed in the House of Commons last night to propose to Earl Grey and his colleagues an arrangement which would effect the object they have in view, at the same time that it would relieve him from the embarrassment under which he had been placed by their proposal to make so extensive a creation of Peers for the purpose of passing the Bill.

The King is sensible of the readiness which Earl Grey and his colleagues have expressed to act for the advantage of his service, and has already subscribed to the conditions they attach to their continuance in office, as they apply to the measure which has produced the difficulty, namely, a sufficient security that they shall possess the power of passing the present Bill, unimpaired in its principles and its essential provisions, and as nearly as possible in its present form; and His Majesty trusts that this measure will henceforth be effected without their being under the necessity of calling upon him for a creation of Peers. The King cannot but express his regret that Earl Grey and his colleagues should, at this period, and circumstanced as is His Majesty, have connected with the expressions of their readiness to continue to him the benefit of their services, the call upon him for the surrender of a pledge that they shall receive his consent to a creation of Peers, if it should be required to give additional strength to His Majesty's Government in the House of Lords. Had the King forfeited any pledge given to them, had he withheld his support, had he hesitated to place at their disposal all that could be useful to them, had he pursued a course calculated to raise doubt or suspicion of his honesty, he must have been prepared for the imposition of conditions at such a period. As it is, he trusts that it is unnecessary for him to say more, than that Earl Grey and his colleagues may safely rely upon His Majesty's past conduct, upon the readiness with which he assented to their recommendations for creations of Peers at his coronation, and upon the support it has been his invariable desire to give to his Government, for the assurance that, if a creation of Peers should be required tc give additional strength to His Majesty's Government in the House of Lords, His Majesty's sanction to the measure, under certain and reasonable limitations, will not be wanting.

The King will be prepared to receive Earl Grey at one o'clock to-morrow. WILLIAM R.

No. 440.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor

(Private.) Downing Street, May 16, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—As the King may expect an answer to his letter, I think it necessary to apprise you that it will not be in the power of the Cabinet to send it to-night.

We are all most desirous of avoiding the necessity of pressing upon His Majesty a creation of Peers, but our difficulty is in finding any mode of showing to Parliament and the country that we have a security for carrying the Bill equivalent to that measure.

Upon considering the suggestion of a declaration by the Duke of Wellington, there appears to be a great difficulty in proposing such a proceeding. What we talked of this morning appears, on many accounts, to be objec tionable.

Perhaps the best course will be to wait till after to-morrow, when, if what passes in the House of Lords should appear to furnish a sufficient assurance of our being able to carry the measure, the difficulty may be removed.

But we shall have the matter further under consideration this evening, and you may expect from me a further communication to-morrow.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 441.

Minute of Cabinet.

May 16, 1832.

At a meeting of your Majesty's servants held this evening, at the house of Mr. Stanley,

PRESENT:

The Lord Chancellor,	The Viscount Althorp,
The Lord President,	The Viscount Palmerston,
The Lord Privy Seal,	The Lord Holland,
The Duke of Richmond,	The Lord J. Russell,
The Earl Grey,	The Right Hon. E. G. Stanley,
The Viscount Melbourne,	Sir J. Graham,
The Viscount Goderich,	The Right Hon. C. Grant,

your Majesty's servants, after the fullest consideration of your Majesty's letter of yesterday to Earl Grey, have unanimously agreed humbly to submit to your Majesty as follows:—

By the failure of the Duke of Wellington's endeavour to form a new Administration, and by the reference made by your Majesty to your present servants, they find themselves in a situation in many respects similar to that in which they were placed after the vote on Lord Lyndhurst's motion in the Committee of the House of Lords on Monday the 7th inst.

Your Majesty has been pleased to concur in the opinion submitted to your Majesty in Lord Grey's letter of yesterday, that it is necessary to pass the Reform Bill with as little delay as possible, unimpaired in all its principles and essential provisions, and as nearly as possible in its present form, in order to put an end to the agitation which now prevails; and also that your Majesty's servants cannot continue in their present situations without a sufficient security that they will have power to insure this result.

The first question, therefore, to be considered is, how this security is to be obtained?

In this view two modes only present themselves to your Majesty's servants,—the one, a cessation, on the part of the adversaries of the Bill, of the opposition which has hitherto obstructed its progress; the other, such a creation of Peers as should give your Majesty's servants sufficient power to overcome that opposition.

The former of these alternatives appears to your Majesty's servants to be one on which it is impossible to come to any previous understanding or arrangement; to the other, your Majesty's servants are unwilling now, as they ever have been, to urge your Majesty to resort whilst the hope exists of finding any other means by which the Reform Bill may be carried unimpaired.

Your Majesty's servants, therefore, humbly beg your Majesty's permission to defer till Friday any final answer to the letter which Earl Grey had yesterday the honour of receiving from your Majesty.

All which, &c.

No. 442.

The King to Earl Grey.

St. James's Palace, May 17, 1832.

The King transmits to Earl Grey the copy of a communication which has been made by his order to the Duke of Wellington and many other Peers; and acquaints him that, in the event of the declaration being made in the House of Lords which is therein suggested, Earl Grey is authorised by His Majesty to state to the House of Lords, that His Majesty has been pleased to express his desire that Earl Grey and his colleagues should continue in his Councils.

WILLIAM R.

(Enclosure.)

Sir H. Taylor to the Duke of Wellington.

St. James's Palace, May 17, 1832.

My dear Lord Duke,—I have received the King's commands to acquaint your Grace, that all difficulties and obstacles to the arrangement in progress will be removed by a declaration in the House of Lords this day, from a sufficient number of Peers, that, in consequence of the present state of things, they have come to the resolution of dropping their further opposition to the Reform Bill, so that it may pass, as nearly as possible, in its present form.

Should your Grace agree to this, as he hopes you will, His Majesty requests you will communicate on the subject with Lord Lyndhurst, Lord Ellenborough, and any other Peers who may be disposed to concur with you.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

N.B.—In the letters to other Peers the introduction is 'With reference to what has passed between His Majesty and Y. R. H. or Y. L.,' and the last paragraph is omitted, the letter ending with the words 'present form.'

No. 443.

Memorandum from Sir H. Taylor.

May 17, 1832.

The King is prepared to take steps to obtain from Peers a declaration in the House that, in consequence of the present state of things, they have come to the resolution of dropping their further opposition to the Reform Bill, and will therefore absent themselves from the discussion, so that it may pass without delay; and that the King may be relieved from being again advised to exercise his prerogative in an extensive creation of Peers for the purpose of carrying the Bill.

His Majesty has ordered me to add an autograph list of Peers who have declared to him personally their intention not further to oppose the Reform Bill, if His Majesty shall be thereby relieved from the necessity of making Peers for the purpose of carrying the Bill as it now stands; and His Majesty is prepared to communicate to them his wish to that effect, before the House of Lords meets this day.

H. TAYLOR.

No. 444.

Earl Grey to the King.

Downing Street, May 17, 1832.

Earl Grey presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and has the honour of acknowledging your Majesty's most gracious letter of this day, authorising him, if the declaration expected to be made by the opposers of the Reform Bill should prove satisfactory, to announce your Majesty's desire that he and his colleagues should continue in your Majesty's Councils.

He also has the honour of enclosing, for your Majesty's information, a list of Peers present, and of the speakers in the debate in the House of Lords this evening.

He is sorry to inform your Majesty that nothing could be more unsatisfactory or embarrassing. The Duke of Wellington and Lord Lyndhurst opened the discussion in two speeches of extreme violence, which seemed to be made less with a view to the explanation of their own conduct, than for the purpose of attacking the conduct of your Majesty's present servants. They were followed, in speeches of extreme virulence, by Lords Carnarvon, Mansfield, Winchelsea, and Haddington; and the debate ended without any declaration of the nature which Lord Grey had been taught to expect, by the communication which he had the honour of receiving from your Majesty this morning.

This rendered it impossible for him to say more than that the communication which he had the honour of receiving from your Majesty on Wednesday last had yet produced no decisive result, and places him and his colleagues in a situation of extreme embarrassment, which must be the subject of consideration in a Cabinet summoned for to-morrow at twelve, the result of which Earl Grey will have the honour of communicating to your Majesty.

All which, &c. GREY.

No. 445.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, May 17, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I have not yet recovered my astonishment at what has passed in the House of Lords to-night. It was in vain that I endeavoured to prevent irritation by answering in a very mitigated tone, not to say tamely, two extremely violent speeches from the Duke of Wellington and Lord Lyndhurst, in the hope that the expected declaration would come at last. They were followed by speeches still more bitter from Lord Mansfield, Lord Carnarvon, Lord Haddington, and others, but not a word of any declaration of abstaining from opposition. They got up in a body at the end of Lord Carnarvon's speech, and left the House; which was, I suppose, intended as a secession, but without any declaration of an intention to let the Bill pass, so that they are at liberty to return in force whenever they may see a favourable opportunity for striking a blow.

This leaves us in a situation of extreme embarrassment; we have no security against their re-appearing in force at any moment; and they are evidently combined, and determined to exert their united efforts to overthrow the Administration if it remains in our hands, whenever they may see an opening for an attack: in short, we remain entirely at their mercy. As the Peers were leaving the House, Lord Strangford said to somebody near him, 'You see Sir H. Taylor's famous letter did no good.'

In these circumstances I see no resource but our reverting to the Minute which was delivered to the King by the Lord Chancellor and me at Windsor. But this will be the subject of our deliberation in the Cabinet, which is to meet at twelve to-morrow.

It is evident that a very improper use has been made of the papers communicated to the Duke of Wellington and Lord Lyndhurst by the King. The Duke of Richmond's dissent was openly stated, and there were other allusions to what had passed between the King and his Ministers.

The best solution of the difficulty would be the formation of a new Administration; and when our resignation is made a charge against us, I should like to know what is to be said of Sir R. Peel's refusal to take office?

I have, &c. GREY.

No. 446.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

St. James's Palace, May 17, 1832.

My dear Lord,—The King has ordered me to send your Lordship the copy of a letter from the Duke of Wellington in reply to that which His Majesty has communicated to you, and to say that both his Grace and Lord Lyndhurst had certainly declared to him their intention of absenting themselves from the further discussion of the Reform Bill, observing that they made this declaration for themselves individually, and could not answer for others, which indeed I told your Lordship I had heard them say. Many others have, however, made the same statement to His Majesty; and the Duke of Cumberland, who came to me to acknowledge verbally the receipt of my letter, told me that he should consult with his friends, and would probably take the same course as the Duke of Wellington; indeed, that he had told His Majesty he would either absent himself, or abstain from dividing upon any clause. The Duke of Gloucester told me he had already stated to His Majesty he would not further oppose the Bill.

Lord Farnborough has signified his acquiescence in the King's wish, but I have not heard from any others.

Upon the whole, although the Duke of Wellington may decline to make any declaration in the House of Lords, His Majesty trusts that others may, and that enough will be said in the Lords in confirmation of the statements made to His Majesty to afford to your Lordship the security you require.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

(Enclosure.)

The Duke of Wellington to Sir H. Taylor.

London, May 17, 1832.

My dear General,—I have received your letter of this day's date. I told the King that, as an individual Peer, I would not attend the further discussion of the Reform Bill. Lord Lyndhurst did the same. We both propose to act accordingly.

But I confess that I don't think that I can declare in the House of Lords what my course will be, as a condition that the Minister should refrain from his recommendation that Peers should be created to carry the Bill, without making myself a party to his proceeding.

Ever, &c. WELLINGTON.

No. 447.

The King to Earl Grey.

St. James's Palace, May 18, 1832.

The King received last night Earl Grey's letter enclosing a list of the Peers present, and of the speakers in the debate in the House of Lords, and reporting the proceedings.

His Majesty sincerely laments the fresh difficulties which have arisen, and which he acknowledges to have greatly deceived his expectations. He is sensible also of the embarrassment in which it places Earl Grey as well as himself, by bringing again under the consideration of his confidential servants the propriety of advising His Majesty to adopt a measure to which he believes Earl Grey to entertain aversion not far short of that which His Majesty has manifested. It had been His Majesty's anxious desire to obtain for Earl Grey and his colleagues the security which they required, and the step he took yesterday must have proved it. He believes the intention to relieve His Majesty from the necessity of taking a step which is known to be so odious to him to exist, but unfortunately there is a feeling of soreness and irritation which prevents an intimation being given to that effect such as would satisfy Earl Grey; and it is lamentable to reflect that His Majesty's honour, his scruples of conscience, his future peace and comfort, shall be sacrificed to the absence of mere form, and to the disinclination to come to an understanding upon a point which had seemed to have been as good as settled, and which His Majesty believes to have been agreed to among a sufficient number of Peers opposed to the Bill, to have effected the object in view. The King having early this morning received a letter from the Earl of Mansfield, transmits to Earl Grey a copy of his answer. It is his intention to convey to other Peers who may communicate with him on this occasion the sentiments expressed in that letter.

WILLIAM R.

(Enclosure.)

The King to the Earl of Mansfield.

St. James's Palace, May 18, 1832.

The King has received the Earl of Mansfield's letter, dated at eleven o'clock last night, and he thanks him for the assurance of attachment it contains.

His Majesty has no hesitation in stating to the Earl of Mansfield, that the proceedings in the House of Lords last night, as reported to him from various sources, have occasioned to him great concern and disappointment, and have materially increased those difficulties and obstacles to a satisfactory arrangement, which it had been the object of the communication His Majesty ordered Sir Herbert Taylor to make to the Earl of Mansfield and to other Peers to remove.

His Majesty had received assurances from the Duke of Wellington and Lord Lyndhurst, when they announced to him the impossibility of forming an Administration, that, as individual Peers, they would not attend the further discussion of the Reform Bill. His Majesty received similar assurances from other Peers, in personal communication to himself; and viewing these, as surely he was justified in doing, as an abandonment of their further opposition to the Bill in the House of Lords, and as an engagement which placed in his hands the option and the means of relieving himself from the necessity of exercising his prerogative in an extensive creation of Peers for the purpose of carrying the Reform Bill, His Majesty had hoped that an intimation to that effect from those so disposed would not have been withheld.

It is impossible for the King, circumstanced as he now is, to enter into other parts of the Earl of Mansfield's letter; and his object in addressing this to him is to state, for his own information and that of any Peers with whom he may think fit or useful to communicate, the occasion and the grounds of the letter addressed to the Earl of Mansfield and other Peers yesterday.

The King will consider the Earl of Mansfield's letter as confidential, and will reserve it to himself; but he deems it his duty to send a copy of his answer to Earl Grey.
WILLIAM R.

No. 448.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) St. James's, May 18, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have had the honour of submitting your Lordship's letter of yesterday night to the King, who had previously signed the letter in reply to that you addressed to himself, and has since ordered me to refer you to that for the expression of the feeling of vexation and disappointment with which His Majesty learnt the proceedings in the House of Lords last night.

His Majesty laments the violence with which some of the opposition Lords are reported to have spoken, and the reports made to him from other quarters fully confirm what you say of Lord Lyndhurst's speech, at the same time that they admit yours to have been free from irritation, and temperate and calm.

I must not, however, disguise from your Lordship—and I am certain that, in these times and under the present extraordinary circumstances, you will receive the communication in the spirit in which it is conveyed, and not ascribe it to an abuse of the indulgence which has marked your intercourse with me—that I have learnt from a Peer, a personal friend, and by no means a violent party man, that 'several Peers had intended to take an opportunity of declaring their intention of not opposing the Reform Bill in the Committee *and in the subsequent stages*, but that your speech was so peremptory and unconciliatory that they abandoned their intention.'

I am aware that every communication of this nature must be received with caution; and I am aware also, from what has been further said to me, that those who were disposed to make such a declaration had formed an unreasonable expectation of some communication from your Lordship, which might have afforded an opening, for they state that none had been given, nor any inducement for any Peer to make such a declaration as His Majesty wished.

Under all circumstances, His Majesty has not abandoned the hope that some one may come forward, and others concur, to the effect suggested by him; and he flatters himself that his letter to Lord Mansfield may do some good.

His Majesty has learnt with regret, from your Lordship's letter, that an improper use has been made of the papers communicated to the Duke of Wellington and Lord Lyndhurst by His Majesty. But His Majesty orders me to observe, upon this point, that he cannot admit that, circumstanced as he was, he was under any obligation not to make such communication to those two Peers as he might consider advisable and necessary. His Majesty had accepted the resignation of your Lordship and your colleagues; and although you continued, at his request, in the discharge of your official functions, His Majesty was *avowedly* in communication with the Duke of Wellington and Lord Lyndhurst with respect to the formation of a new Administration. It was natural, it was indispensable, it was due to himself, that His Majesty should put these individuals in possession of the grounds on which he applied to them; and he felt, above all, the necessity of stating to them freely, though with full justice to *both* parties, what had passed on the subject of a creation of Peers, because the principle on which he had acted, and the honesty of his proceedings on that subject, had been called in question, and had been misrepresented in public print, at public meetings and in other quarters, not excepting even the House of Commons, in a manner which placed his character before his subjects in an odious and a disgraceful light.

The King does not deny having communicated to the Duke of Wellington and to Lord Lyndhurst the fact of the Duke of Richmond having dissented from the advice given to him, to make Peers for the purpose of carrying the Reform Bill; but, upon this subject and many others, he does not believe that he stated any thing to them which was not matter of public notoriety.

The King will await with extreme solicitude the result of your deliberations, and I need not add how anxiously I pray that it may tend to His Majesty's ease and satisfaction.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 449.

Minute of Cabinet.

May 18, 1832.

Your Majesty's servants having been assembled to consider the situation in which they now find themselves, in consequence of what passed last night in the House of Lords, and having before them your Majesty's most gracious letter of this morning to Earl Grey, have agreed to submit to your Majesty as follows:—They beg leave, in the first place, to renew to your Majesty the assurance of their grateful sense of your Majesty's most gracious wish that they should continue in your Majesty's councils; of their anxious desire to do everything in their power for your Majesty's ease and comfort; and, at the same time, of their deep regret that the event of last night's discussion in the House of Lords has not realised the hope which your Majesty entertained, and which they had cherished, that declarations expected to be made by the chief adversaries of the Reform Bill would have put an end to all fear of its not being carried, unimpaired in its principles and in its essential provisions, and as nearly as possible in its present form.

The first security, therefore, proposed in the Cabinet Minute of the 16th instant having failed, your Majesty's servants see no other possible except the second, which was submitted in the same Minute, viz. 'such a creation of Peers as would afford your Majesty's servants sufficient power to overcome the opposition to the Bill.' An assurance of your Majesty's consent to such a creation, in the event of any fresh obstacle arising, which should, in the humble judgment of your Majesty's servants, render it necessary for the success of the Bill, would afford to your Majesty's servants the security which, for the public safety, they feel themselves compelled to require as a condition of their continuance in office.

But they feel increased reluctance in pressing it upon your Majesty after the feelings expressed by your Majesty, in terms still stronger than on any former occasion, in your Majesty's most gracious letter of this morning to Earl Grey, terms which have given them more pain because they have formerly had your Majesty's gracious permission to recommend such a creation as might be sufficient to secure the success of the Bill, and your Majesty's specific consent to the number of forty-one Peers.

They beg most humbly to assure your Majesty that nothing could make them indifferent to your Majesty's honour, to your scruples of conscience, and to your future peace; still less could they overlook these considerations from any punctilious adherence to a mere form.

To insure them, on the contrary, there is no personal sacrifice which they would not readily make, provided it could be effectual for that purpose. But in the present state of the public mind, in the actual situation of the country, they are convinced that, whilst all the difficulties which with deep sorrow they now see pressing upon your Majesty would be greatly increased, they themselves would be deprived of all hope of acting usefully for your Majesty's service, either now or hereafter, if they were to continue in your

Majesty's councils without a full and indisputable security, as was expressed in their former Minute and assented to by your Majesty, for insuring the speedy settlement of the Reform Bill in such a manner as would satisfy the just expectations of the public, and put an end to the agitation which now unhappily prevails.

All which, &c.

No. 450.

The King to Earl Grey.

St. James's Palace, May 18, 1832.

The King's mind has been too deeply engaged in the consideration of the circumstances in which this country is placed, and of his own position, to require that His Majesty should hesitate to say, in reply to the Minute of Cabinet left with him this afternoon by Earl Grey and the Lord Chancellor, that it continues to be, as stated in his recent communications to his confidential servants, His Majesty's wish and desire that they remain in his councils.

His Majesty is, therefore, prepared to afford to them the security they require for passing the Reform Bill unimpaired in its principles and in its essential provisions, and as nearly as possible in its present form; and with this view His Majesty authorises Earl Grey, if any obstacle should arise during the further progress of the Bill, to submit to him a creation of Peers to such extent as shall be necessary to enable him to carry the Bill, always bearing in mind that it has been and still is His Majesty's object to avoid any permanent increase to the Peerage, and therefore that this addition to the House of Peers, if unfortunately it should become necessary, shall comprehend as large a proportion of the eldest sons of Peers and collateral heirs of childless Peers as can possibly be brought forward. In short (to quote the Lord Chancellor's own words used in the interview between His Majesty, his Lordship, and Earl Grey), that the lists of eldest sons and collaterals who can be brought forward shall be completely exhausted before any list be resorted to which can entail a permanent addition to the Peerage.

Subject to these conditions, which have been already stated verbally, and admitted by Earl Grey and the Lord Chancellor, His Majesty assents to the proposal conveyed in the Minute of Cabinet of this day; and this main point being so disposed of, it is unnecessary that His Majesty should notice any other part of the Minute. WILLIAM R.

No. 451.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, May 18, 1832.

Dear Sir Herbert,—I will, with as little delay as possible, lay the King's answer to the Minute of Cabinet before my colleagues, and in the meantime I have acknowledged it in the accompanying letter to His Majesty. It is entirely satisfactory, and His Majesty may be assured, that if it should become necessary to propose a creation of Peers, a necessity which I sincerely hope will not arise, it will be my desire, as it is my duty, to attend strictly to His Majesty's wishes as to the manner in which it shall be made.

My declaration seemed to excite new fury in our adversaries, and I am afraid we shall have a good deal of trouble in the Committee. The Archbishop of York's declaration was very full and very useful; and Lord Harewood, though his speech contained great bitterness against the Administration, declared he would not give further opposition.

* * * * *

I did not get to dinner till nine o'clock, and I am quite knocked up with the fatigue of the last ten days; I am, therefore, under the necessity of sending an excuse for not being at the Queen's ball to-night. Pray do what you can to prevent a wrong construction being put on my absence. I really am very unwell.

Ever, &c. GREY.

No. 452.

Earl Grey to the King.

Downing Street, May 18, 1832.

Earl Grey presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and has the honour of acknowledging the receipt of your Majesty's most gracious answer to the Minute of Cabinet, which he will immediately lay before his colleagues. In the meantime Earl Grey begs your Majesty to accept his humble thanks for the gracious manner in which your Majesty has been pleased to assent to the opinions submitted to your Majesty by your confidential servants.

Earl Grey, in answer to a question put to him by Lord Harewood, announced to the House the continuance of your Majesty's Ministers in office in obedience to your Majesty's most gracious desire; stating at the same time that they did so with a confident expectation that it would be in their power to carry the Bill through its further stages. Before this, the Archbishop of York, in a very satisfactory speech, explained the conduct which he had pursued in the former stages of both Bills, and declared his intention of supporting your Majesty's Ministers in future. A long debate ensued, with a good deal of the usual acrimony, which led to no conclusion, except that the Bill will experience a good deal of opposition in the Committee, from Lords Carnarvon, Ellenborough, Wharncliffe, and others. It is necessary however to observe, that, with respect to Lord Ellenborough, this conjecture was not founded on anything that passed in the debate, as he took no part in it. Earl Grey encloses a list of the Peers present and the speakers. The House adjourned soon after eight.

All which, &c. Grey.

Earl Grey finds that he has omitted to state that he was a good deal pressed with respect to the creation of Peers, by questions which he refused to answer; and that Lord Harewood, whose speech was very hostile, declared that he would not oppose the Bill in its future stages.

No. 453.

The King to Earl Grey.

St. James's Palace, May 19, 1832.

The King has received Earl Grey's letter of yesterday, enclosing a list of Peers and speakers in the debate in the House of Lords last night, from which His Majesty has learnt with pleasure that the Archbishop of York made so satisfactory a speech. His Majesty is more concerned than surprised at the irritation which still prevails, and the acrimony of some of the opponents to the Reform Bill; but he trusts that, however annoying, it will prove no serious obstacle. His Majesty approves of the temperate course pursued by Earl Grey upon this occasion.

WILLIAM R.

No. 454.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, May 19, 1831.

Dear Sir Herbert,—Will you have the goodness to let me know in what manner the persons holding offices under Government, whose resignations had been accepted, are to be reinstated, particularly those who held offices in the Household. For the Duke of Devonshire and those who had not delivered up their sticks, I suppose nothing more will be required than an intimation, by order of His Majesty, of his desire that they should continue as before. For those who had actually delivered up their sticks, &c., I conclude it will be necessary that they should receive them again, as new appointments from His Majesty's hands, and that notice should be given them to attend for this purpose.

The more I think of what passed in the House of Lords last night, and the appearance which it exhibited, the more reason I see to apprehend a very troublesome opposition, and perhaps a stronger one than may be safe for the progress of the Bill. They really are hurried away by a degree of passion which knows no control; and as they appear to attend in considerable numbers with most of the more active debaters of the party, it becomes extremely urgent that every possible measure should be taken to prevent the embarrassment into which both His Majesty and the Government may be thrown, by their carrying a vote in the Committee. I hope, therefore, you will do all you can to insure the absence, if it is impossible to procure for the Government the support, of as many of its former adversaries as possible. As long as this question remains unsettled jealousy and suspicion will remain awake, and agitation more or less will continue. One of the surest means of expediting the progress of the Bill through the Committee will be a good division on the first vote that may be taken. With this I should hope it may not be necessary to propose to create a single Peer at present, and I am as anxious to avoid that necessity as the King himself can be.

I hope you will not forget my request of your good offices to prevent, if possible, any misrepresentation of my absence from the ball last night.

* * * * *

Ever, &c. GREY.

No. 455.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) St. James's, May 19, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I have had the honour of submitting to the King your Lordship's letters of last night and this day, and I am directed to assure you that both have proved satisfactory to His Majesty, as they regard your own views and your desire to meet his wishes.

His Majesty is sensible of the importance of insuring the absence (if it is impossible to procure for Government the support) of as many of its former adversaries as possible, and he has authorised me to use every advisable endeavour for that purpose. I had indeed already spoken to Lord Skelmersdale and impressed him with the necessity of coming to some understanding or concert and he gave me hopes that there would be a meeting of those disposed to take that course. I have a satisfactory letter from Lord Brownlow, who, in reply to the letter I addressed to him on Thursday, states that notwithstanding what has since passed he still trusts the object proposed is not left hopeless, and he has reason to think that there will be a *considerable secession* from attendance at the House of Lords.

I shall call as soon as His Majesty goes to Kew and Richmond (soon after three) upon Lord Farnborough, and see what I can do through him, but he is unwell.

The King orders me to say, that he had already accounted for your Lordship's absence from the Ball, and taken care that no misconstruction should be put upon it, and he hopes that these two days of comparative rest may remove the effects of fatigue.

With regard to the persons holding offices under Government and those in the Household whose resignations had been accepted and who are all to be reinstalled, all that will, in His Majesty's opinion, be necessary, is that they should receive from your Lordship or Lord Melbourne an intimation by order of His Majesty, that they should continue as before, with the sole exception of Lord Clanricarde and Lord Foley, who, having delivered up their sticks, may attend to-morrow between three and four o'clock to resume them.

The King has expressed himself very satisfied with the assurance given to him yesterday by yourself and Lord Brougham, that you considered him perfectly justified in the communication he had made to the Duke of Wellington and Lord Lyndhurst of such documents as were necessary to put them in possession of the circumstances which had produced his acceptance of your resignations and his application to them.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

His Majesty will not return until nearly dinner time to-day. I believe their Majesties will remain in town until 1st of June.

No. 456.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, May 20, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I received your letters, and one from His Majesty, in answer to that which I had written the night before, yesterday evening. It appears unnecessary that I should trouble His Majesty with any other acknowledgment of the latter than this, which I beg you to make to him with my humble duty.

It gave me the greatest pleasure to learn that His Majesty had been satisfied with the communications which have been lately made to him. I can assure you that nothing is more anxiously desired, by all my colleagues as well as by myself, by all means in our power, in circumstances of unparalleled difficulty, to show ourselves worthy of the confidence he has been pleased to repose in us, by doing everything we can to remove every cause of uneasiness from His Majesty's mind. For this purpose the most essential point is the speedy and effectual settlement of this long depending question. What we know of the intended secession, encourages me to hope that this may be accomplished. But I am still under the apprehension of considerable difficulty in the Committee, and I shall be very nervous till the first day is over.

I met Lord Palmerston on my way home yesterday, and was very sorry to find that I had missed you, when you called in Downing Street. He told me what you had said, but I am afraid it will hardly be possible to postpone the Committee. I could give no good reason for doing so, and without a good reason, it would have a very bad effect. I had never understood that the Duke of Wellington and Lord Lyndhurst had promised for more than themselves, but I hope their example will be followed by enough to secure the passing of the Bill. It really is a most anxious moment. I know the King doubts the extent and intensity of the feeling which exists on this occasion, but I can assure you that it was, and is, most formidable.

I have written to Lords Clanricarde and Foley to attend to-day at St. James's, between three and four, to receive their sticks, but I have some fear that my letters may not reach them in time. In that case, perhaps you would have the goodness to signify to them His Majesty's pleasure when they should attend.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 457.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) St. James's Palace, May 20, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I called in Downing Street yesterday afternoon, to tell your Lordship, and not finding you or Mr. Wood, I mentioned to Lord Palmerston, that those Peers, who are using their endeavours to increase the number of seceders or non-voters on the Reform Bill, wished for another day or two. I have, however, since seen Lord Farnborough, Lord Brownlow, and Lord Skelmersdale, and I learn from them that they do not now wish for any postponement of the question.

By comparing notes I make out about twenty-four Peers, who have stated their intention to absent themselves or not to vote, and there are some others named as doubtful. These are of course independent of those who may take their line without reference to my friends, or who may be communicated with by others.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 458.

(Extract.)

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) St. James's Palace, May 20, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I think it necessary, upon this occasion, to state to your Lordship, that, finding the progress of the endeavours I had been ordered to promote, checked by some uncertainty, or assumed uncertainty, as to the position in which the question stood, I stated to those with whom I communicated, and without any restriction as to their use of the authority, that in case any obstacle should arise in the progress of the Bill, your Lordship had His Majesty's authority to submit to him such a creation of Peers as should be sufficient to carry the Bill, and I added that they, therefore, had before them the alternative of the Reform Bill with an addition to the Peerage, or the Reform Bill without it.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 459.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) St. James's Palace, May 22, 1832.

My dear Lord,—The King being in a hurry to go to Kew, where their Majesties will pass the day, has ordered me to acknowledge your Lordship's report of the proceedings in the House of Lords last night, and of the lists of Peers present and speakers.

His Majesty was glad to find that some progress had been made in the Bill without any opposition which could be considered an obstacle, and he begins to feel confident that none will arise.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 460.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, May 24, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I enclose a resolution which I received yesterday from Liverpool, to dissolve the Political Unions when the Reform Bill is passed, and an Irish paper containing an address to the Bishop of Derry, which has given me peculiar pleasure, as it confirms the expectation which I entertained of his conduct, when I recommended his promotion to that See. If you think these documents will prove interesting to the King, pray have the goodness to show them to His Majesty.

But the chief object of my now troubling you, is the unfortunate situation in which the Duke of Sussex is placed with respect to the King. I had some conversation with His Royal Highness on this subject last night in the House of Lords. Nothing could be more feeling, or more expressive of duty and attachment to His Majesty, than every word that fell from His Royal Highness, and I feel confident that he would be ready to do anything that could properly be required of him, to be replaced on those terms of mutual kindness with respect to His Majesty, which his duty as a subject, and his natural affection as a brother, must always make him anxious to preserve.

I really have felt great anxiety on this subject, not more on account of my duty and attachment to the King, and the friendship with which the Duke of Sussex has honoured me, than from considerations of the greatest moment to the public interest. Nothing can be more to be lamented than any division or appearance of a division between the King and any of the members of the Royal Family, at a time when there are so many mischievous spirits in activity, and ready to take advantage of any occurrence which may afford the means of increasing the public irritation. On all these accounts I am most anxious to find the means, if possible, of putting an end to the discussions which arise from His Royal Highness's absence from Court, being convinced that it has been occasioned by inadvertence only, on the part of His Royal Highness, in conveying a petition, which certainly was such as must necessarily excite the displeasure of His Majesty, and not by any intentional failure in the respect which His

Royal Highness owes to his Sovereign, or in the sincere affection with which he is animated as a brother. I will not give you the trouble of answering this letter, but will call on you at two o'clock. These matters are always better discussed in conversation, and I shall be most happy if I can be instrumental in removing from the King's mind the impression which has produced an interruption of the intercourse hitherto so happily subsisting between His Majesty and the Duke of Sussex.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 461.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) St. James's, May 28, 1832.

My dear Lord,—Although the King has not communicated with your Lordship very recently on the subject of the Reform Bill, His Majesty has not been inattentive to its progress, nor indifferent to what has passed, and he has ordered me to express the surprise with which he has noticed the proceedings on the Irish Reform Bill. His Majesty had received an impression from your Lordship's occasional observations, that you considered it liable to great objection, and that you participated in the wish which many others entertained, that it should not pass, or at least that it should not pass without essential alterations; yet, as far as His Majesty can judge from the newspapers, it is passing, and the only material alteration is one which would seem to render it yet more objectionable, namely, the subtraction of a member from the University of Dublin for the purpose of giving him to Kilkenny, and this in deference to the suggestion of Mr. O'Connell. The King sincerely hopes he may be mistaken in this understanding of what has passed, or that there may be some remedy *in store*, as he cannot conceal his dread of anything connected with the representation of Ireland, or with the possible results of the Reform Bill for that country, which meets with the concurrence and approbation of Mr. O'Connell.

There is another point of more general importance, upon which the King has expressed his feeling so strongly to me, that I have solicited his permission to state it to your Lordship, as I found him unwilling to make it the subject of a formal communication, lest it should betray a desire on his part to revive discussions which have been embarrassing and painful.

The result of recent events, and of the communications which have passed with Peers opposed to the Reform Bill, has been its rapid and almost unobstructed progress, not only unimpaired in its principle, and essential provisions, but wholly unaltered and *unimproved*; and His Majesty thinks he may use the latter word without giving to it an offensive character, as there were certain modifications which your Lordship was prepared to admit, and which His Majesty considered material amendments, while you did not seem to view them as prejudicial.

His Majesty is aware that he will be told that these concessions, if they can be so called, have been excluded by the conduct which those opposed to the Bill have pursued. It is not his wish to engage in any discussion on this point, or to argue why his own objections should be disregarded, because others have, in the support of their opinions, and in the course of their opposition, taken a line which is considered to have defeated the object which, at one time, both parties seemed to contemplate. But it is His Majesty's anxious desire to suggest and encourage all that can tend to conciliation, and to diminish the irritation and the acrimony which unfortunately have arisen, and are kept up, in the higher ranks of society in this country, and between the individuals of the greatest respectability and influence.

It is impossible that His Majesty should not look forward with the greatest uneasiness and dread to the possible and too probable effects, of the continued disunion in the House of Lords, and among the most respectable portions of the gentry, at a period when both parties—all, in short, that have any stake, and that are interested in the maintenance of *any* Government, and of the constitution and institutions of the country, whether reformed or unreformed, should, in his opinion, unite against the destroying and demoralizing designs and effects of a *third* party, which appears to be daily increasing in strength and audacity, and which is aided by a press, which the Law Officers of the Crown have stated to be unassailable.

The King's attention has been called to this in some measure by the declarations which have been recently made in public by Mr. Hume, that the Reform Bill was only a stepping-stone to other reforming acts, that speedily would follow, the reformation of the Church, and of corporation property, &c. Others hold the same language, and Mr. Hume has proved himself very persevering in the pursuit of his objects.

The King has reason to believe that those who have dropped their opposition to the Bill, from a feeling of deference to him, and in order to relieve him from the painful necessity of creating Peers for the purpose of passing it, have done considerable violence to their feelings, and that they are hurt and disappointed that they have not, by this sacrifice of their opposition, secured even those modifications which it had been understood that you would not have felt unwilling to admit. His Majesty cannot decide how far it may be practicable for your Lordship to introduce any on the report, or on the third reading, but he is satisfied that if this were practicable and were effected, it would tend in the greatest degree to allay irritation, to conciliate many of those to whom I have adverted, and eventually to secure their support to the Government.

His Majesty is anxious that your Lordship and your colleagues should give your serious consideration to these suggestions, and he trusts that you will give him credit for the feeling which has produced them.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 462.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, May 28, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I have received your letter of this day, and must confess that I have not read it without pain.

It is certainly true that I told His Majesty that there appeared a great probability, from circumstances that had recently occurred, of the rejection of the Irish Reform Bill in the House of Commons; and I believe I added, as an expression of individual feeling occasioned by the conduct of the Irish members in the House of Commons, that such an event would not cause me any great regret. But I am not aware that I expressed any opinion as to the expediency of making any alterations in the Bill as it now stands. In truth, if any Bill is to pass, the 40*s.* freeholders remaining disqualified and the county representation unaltered, it does not seem possible to do less than what is proposed for the purpose of opening the close boroughs.

With respect to the member for the University, though perhaps that addition was not sufficiently considered with a view to the nature of the constituency, very different from that of the English Universities, by which he is to be returned, having been once proposed I think it cannot be altered; and this matter having been brought under the consideration of the Cabinet yesterday, it was determined to adhere to the Bill in this respect, as it now stands.

It is also most correctly stated by His Majesty, that if the opposition to the Bill had been conducted in a different manner, some alterations, though those that were most insisted upon did not appear to me advisable, might have been submitted to, in the hope of carrying the Bill in substance with greater satisfaction to all parties. But after the temporary suspension of the Government, and the effect produced by it on the public mind, it became evident, and I did not conceal this from His Majesty, that the only safe course was to pass the Bill with as little delay as possible, and as nearly as might be in its present form, for the purpose of putting an end to the agitation which had arisen to so great a height. This will be found, on reference to my letter of the 15th instant, to have been distinctly expressed by me, with the concurrence of my colleagues in the Government, and assented to by His Majesty in his letter of the same date, though with an expression of his continued wish for some modifications.

The most important of these modifications was one which was proposed with respect to the London districts; but on this I distinctly stated to His Majesty, that it was no longer possible, and I had the satisfaction of finding, in the discussion which took place on this point, that the clear and able statement of Lord Durham had satisfied many who before doubted, and weakened the objections even of those who were most opposed to the Bill. To introduce this or similar alterations on the report or third reading, I am compelled, with the same frankness which I before used in my conversation with His Majesty, to state, is now more impossible than ever. To conciliate the adversaries of the Bill, though without much hope that anything would produce that effect, I would do much, and I beg you to assure His Majesty, that it is no pertinacious adherence to opinions once expressed that prevents my making large concessions for this purpose. But believing, in the first place, that the alterations to which I have adverted, would not be in themselves improvements of the Bill, and in the second, that they would revive the agitation which is now subsiding, I could not, in conscience or in duty, now subscribe to them.

Nobody can regret more than I do the extreme violence which this question has produced, but I think I may safely appeal to those who are the most reasonable amongst my opponents, whether this has in any degree been provoked by me. I have, on the contrary, endeavoured to bear, and, indeed, have borne with patience and moderation, a series of personal attacks, such as, in times of the greatest political heat and animosity, have seldom been directed against any Minister. To put an end to this, I repeat it, I would do much; but I cannot be an accessory to what I believe would be fatal to the peace of the country; and if the spirit which still exists should unfortunately prevail in making a successful opposition to the Bill in its future stages, I could not be responsible for the public safety for twelve hours. I write in great haste, before I dress for the drawing-room, that you may immediately be possessed of my personal feelings on this matter, which I shall not delay to submit to my colleagues, by calling their attention to your letter at a Cabinet, which I have summoned to meet at four o'clock.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 463.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) St. James's, May 28, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I did not receive your Lordship's letter until after my return from the drawing-room, and I availed myself of the earliest moment to submit it to the King.

His Majesty learnt from it, with great satisfaction, that the Government had come to the determination to resist the attempts of Mr. O'Connell to give another member to Kilkenny, the reported success of which had annoyed him more even than the facility with which the Irish Bill is passing the House of Commons.

With respect to other parts of my letter, His Majesty observed that I could not have clearly expressed his meaning, if what I said could convey an impression, that he was not disposed to admit that the objections now urged by you to his continued anxiety for modifications had not been previously most fully and freely submitted to him by you, or that he doubted the desire you had otherwise shown, to conciliate the opponents of the Bill; and above all, that he did not give you credit for the forbearance and temper with which you had borne their violent and acrimonious attacks during the recent discussions. What His Majesty ordered me to say had reference generally to the irritation which continues to prevail among the higher ranks of society, and to its lamentable effects, and the ruin which they may entail on the country, by favouring the designs of a third *levelling* party. His Majesty has noticed with pain the length to which soreness, and disappointment, and defeat, have driven many most respectable and influential individuals of the opposite party. It has been, it continues to be, his anxious wish to quiet this feeling, and to unite in the support of the Government those who have a common stake and a similar interest in the security of persons and property, and in the maintenance of those institutions on which that security rests; and His Majesty suggested what had occurred to him for your consideration and that of your colleagues, as an object which appeared to him, for the reasons already assigned, very desirable, at the same time that he admitted that he could not decide how far it might be practicable.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 464.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

East Sheen, May 29, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I received your second letter of yesterday, just at the moment when I was going to dinner, and I had not time to answer it afterwards, as I came here to sleep, and to get a day of good air and quiet.

I am much relieved at finding that I had mistaken His Majesty's meaning. I certainly had felt what you said, both as a sort of reproach for not having proposed or accepted considerable alterations in the Reform Bill, and as urging me strongly to introduce such alterations on the report or third reading. Upon the points on which modifications were most anxiously pressed, I have already explained how the difficulties, amounting now to an impossibility, had been increased. The London districts appear now much less formidable, even to the opponents of the Bill than they did, and I forgot to mention, what I hope His Majesty has observed in the debates, that both Lord Wharncliffe and Lord Malmesbury had acknowledged, that, upon fuller information, they did not think the 10*l.* franchise too low. All they pressed was security against its abuse.

All necessary securities of this sort we were willing to admit, and I believe those in the Bill to be complete. But we could not have adopted a rating to the value of 10*l.* as the test: it would have raised the qualification everywhere, and in some instances to 15*l.*, which they admitted to be objectionable; the practice being in no case to rate houses to their full value, and in most instances not higher than three-fourths or two-thirds of the value. But this disadvantage, if it be one, can only be felt in the first register. Afterwards, every person claiming to vote for a 10*l.* tenement will have his rate raised, as a necessary consequence, in that proportion. In truth, the right of voting, taken generally, will be found much less popular than the old one, and a 10*l.* qualification being substituted for scot and lot, and for pot wallopers, who will not vote in future; and you must not be surprised, if you find even those who are now opposing the Bill, declaiming against it as too aristocratic. Indeed, Lord Ellenborough in contending for the scot and lot right of voting, has been on the verge of doing so already.

The first debate on the Irish Bill will show how little agreeable it is to Mr. O'Connell, as I have no doubt that you will find both him, and the Irish members who support him, declaiming violently against it. I must fairly acknowledge, that I believe it would have been better originally, to have given an additional member for Kilkenny rather than to the University. But I am not the less convinced of the expediency of adhering to the present arrangement, though I am aware that many of the friends of the Government will be against them on this point.

With respect to the division in the upper classes of society, and its pernicious effects, nobody can feel these effects, or lament the feeling which has produced them, more sincerely than I do. The Bill once passed, I rather hope, than expect, that the waters of bitterness may cease to flow.

I can only repeat, that there will be every disposition on my part, to bury all that has passed in oblivion. Much as I have been engaged, all my life, in political contention, there is no one to whom this kind of strife is more painful, and I should be too happy if, by withdrawing myself from the scene, I could see these angry passions allayed, and obtain for myself the repose which my age requires.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 465.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, June 4, 1832.

My dear Lord,—The King has ordered me to express to your Lordship the surprise with which he has noticed in the newspaper of this day, that 'a Bill for Abolishing the Punishment of Death in certain cases' was brought up from the Commons to the Lords on Saturday last. To account to you for this surprise, His Majesty orders me to send your Lordship a very recent correspondence, between His Majesty and Lord Althorp, and to call your attention to two passages in Lord Althorp's letter to His Majesty: first, his admission that, 'in assenting to this measure he followed the dictates of his own judgment only, as the question had not come under the consideration of the Cabinet.' Next, that in which he further admits that, in the application of his opinion to a case which came under consideration at the last Council held for the Recorder's report, his advice was opposed to that 'of the Lord Chancellor, and of the Lord Chief Justice, and that His Majesty judged most properly in following their advice, rather than that of those with whom Lord Althorp himself agreed.'

Under these circumstances the King cannot conceive how this Bill should have passed the House of Commons with the support of the Government, which Lord Althorp is considered to represent upon these occasions in that House, without further notice to himself; independently of which His Majesty must apprehend, if the Lord Chancellor and the Judges should differ in opinion with Lord Althorp, upon a question which had 'not come under the consideration of the Cabinet' when he voted for it, that the ground may be laid for fresh collision between the two Houses of Parliament.

I have, &c., H. TAYLOR.

P. S.—May I beg your Lordship to return the enclosures.

No. 466.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) Downing Street, June 5, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I had a very severe attack of indisposition after I wrote my letters of last night,* and still suffer a good deal. I have, however, seen Althorp on the subject of your letter of yesterday, and he confirms the impression which I had received with respect to the proceedings in the House of Commons on Mr. Ewart's Bill for Abolishing the Punishment of Death in certain cases.

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* Missing.

Lord Althorp has already explained to His Majesty that it was not introduced as a Government measure, neither has it received the support of any members of the Government except in their individual capacities, in any stage of the proceeding. Everybody was left free to follow the dictates of his own opinion, and nothing more was done in this than in many other cases of a similar nature, in which the Government took no part. Lord Althorp, it is true, is the representative of the Administration in the House of Commons, but this did not preclude his acting according to his own private judgment on this question, as Mr. Pitt did on that of the Slave Trade, and Lord Castlereagh on that of Catholic Emancipation, it being understood that these measures were not brought forward under the authority of the Cabinet, and that nothing was to be inferred from the part taken upon them by the leading members of the Government beyond the expression of their individual opinions.

With this view of the matter I trust His Majesty will feel that Lord Althorp, having explained the nature of this Bill and the circumstances of its introduction to the House, was not called upon to give any further notice of the proceedings upon it, in which His Majesty's servants, as a Government, had not interfered.

With respect to the question itself, I certainly concur in the opinion expressed in the enclosed note of the Lord Chancellor, to whom I spoke on this subject last night, and whose authority will, I am sure, have its due weight with His Majesty. There seems to me to be nothing more clear, than--that when the infliction of the extreme penalty of the law ceases to operate any longer *in terrorem*, from the multiplied chances of escape, even where prosecutions are instituted upon it, and the further chances of perfect impunity, from the unwillingness of the persons injured to prosecute and of juries to convict, it can no longer be advantageous to maintain it on the Statute Book. The discretion left to the judges does not, in this case, operate beneficially. This discretion is not exercised according to any fixed and settled principle. Different judges act differently, according to their particular opinions. The chances of escape on this account are so great, as to prevent the possibility of extreme punishment from operating as a sufficient preventive of the crime; whilst, on the other hand, the fear that, from particular circumstances, the law may be carried into effect, deters the parties interested from prosecuting to conviction. In the particular crimes, therefore, which are the subjects of Mr. Ewart's Bill, my opinion clearly is, that the policy of the measure is justified.

These are opinions which I have long entertained, and on which I have acted more than once, in giving my vote, both in the House of Lords and the House of Commons. I do not apprehend the failure of the present Bill in the House of Lords. I cannot deny that such an event would be, from circumstances which it cannot be necessary to enumerate, much to be regretted at this moment. But I cannot imagine that it would produce any cause of fresh collision between the two Houses.

You will observe, in the Chancellor's note, that he adverts to the introduction of a Bill for taking away the punishment of death in cases of forgery. I was not aware of the Attorney-General's intention to give notice of a motion for that purpose last night, and wish it had been suspended; but I concur in the Chancellor's view of this matter, and I trust His Majesty will see no reason to object to the Bills going forward.

You will have seen that, in the debate last night, I took occasion to advert to the Political Unions, expressing my conviction that, if established permanently, they must prove a most dangerous obstruction to all settled and regular government. I believe they will be got rid of, if a violent spirit of opposition is not provoked by an attempt to suppress them by force. On this account it is most desirable that all causes of irritation should be avoided as much as possible. There have been many things, on all sides, deeply to be regretted; and as I stated in a former letter, what is most desirable for the security of the Government and the peace of the country, is that the leaf should be turned, as much as possible, on all that is past, and all subjects of mutual complaint buried in oblivion. There have been most indecent attacks on all that is most sacred, and most entitled to our affection and respect; attacks as unjust as they are abominable, calculated to excite disgust and indignation in all good minds, and deserving the severest punishment. But you are already apprised of my opinion on the policy of prosecuting except in very clear and urgent cases; and what has been lately passing in Germany, where the press is conducted in open defiance of all the attempts at a forcible suppression of its licentiousness, affords no slight confirmation of the view which I have taken of this subject.

If the Bill is returned from the House of Commons to-night, it may receive the Royal Assent to-morrow; but upon this the Chancellor will, of course, communicate with His Majesty. The manner in which His Majesty spoke to me upon it precluded my proposing that he should go to pass the Bill in person; but it would hardly be consistent with my duty not to state that the wish that he should do so is very general, and that I believe it would have a great effect in calming the present agitation.

It gave me great pleasure to hear that the King had given the Guelphic Order to Barons Wessenberg and Bulow, and the Grand Cross of the Bath to Lord Palmerston.

It rejoiced me more especially to learn that the latter has received so honourable a mark of His Majesty's favour, which has been earned by a degree of diligence and ability in the management of very difficult affairs which are entitled to the highest praise.

I return the papers containing the King's correspondence with Lord Althorp.

I am, &c. GREY.

No. 467.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, June 5, 1832.

My dear Lord,—The King has ordered me to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's letter of yesterday, enclosing the lists of Peers and speakers, and reporting the division on the third reading of the Reform Bill; and to say that he rejoices that your labours and anxiety on this subject have been brought to a close, and that he hopes you may now have a little leisure to recruit your health. His Majesty was very sorry to learn from your letter to me, that you felt so unwell last night.

* * * * *

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 468.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, June 6, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I was extremely sorry to learn from your Lordship's letter of yesterday, which I received by post this morning, that you had been so unwell the night before, and that you still continued to suffer. As the King sent for me early, and started for London immediately after he had got through the morning's business, it was out of my power to reply to your letter by His Majesty's servant; but I read the whole of it to him, as well as that from Lord Brougham, which I beg to return. He listened to them with attention, and expressed himself quite satisfied with the explanation of the course taken by Lord Althorp with respect to Mr. Ewart's Bill; but His Majesty seems disposed to hold his own opinion on the subject to which it relates; and I apprehend that there may be some difficulty in removing his objections to the provisions of that Bill, or to that of which the Attorney-General has given notice, for taking away the punishment of death in cases of forgery, although I confess that your Lordship's reasoning and that of Lord Brougham appears to me conclusive with respect to both, and they certainly put the question in a much clearer point of view than it had been stated by Lord Althorp to the King. Upon these points and some others (the West India Slavery, for instance) His Majesty clings strongly to opinions and notions early imbibed and long eagerly maintained, although he is in general free from prejudices; and it is my duty to set aside my own when conveying his sentiments, and to make the most of the materials and data with which he furnishes me.

His Majesty, however, said that he would speak to your Lordship on this subject, as well as to Lord Brougham, if he should see him this day, and he had yesterday ordered me to appoint Lord Tenterden after the levee.

He was very glad to learn that your Lordship was so much pleased with his having conferred the Grand Crosses of the Guelph upon Barons Bulow and Wessenberg, and especially with his having given that of the Bath to Lord Palmerston, of whose able and indefatigable exertions His Majesty thinks as you do.

The manner in which you adverted to the Political

Unions in Monday night's debate had not escaped the King, and was noticed by him with much satisfaction. I had previously submitted to His Majesty, that the moment had not yet come for suppressing these associations by acts of authority, but that they would be gradually deserted by respectable persons, and would then become annoying to them, and troublesome from their interference in *local* interests and questions, and would probably then induce the respectable and substantial portions of the community to concur with the Government in the desire to put them down.

I sincerely hope with you, that the irritation which still prevails will gradually, nay rapidly, subside, and that all subjects of mutual complaint may be buried in oblivion; but the excitement has been so great, and the licence of the press has been carried to such lengths, that I fear some time will be required to obliterate the effects.

Your mention of the wish that His Majesty should give the Royal Assent in person to the Reform Bill was expressed so cautiously, that I felt no difficulty in submitting it to him; but it is a point on which he had determined not to give way; and your Lordship will learn from a letter I wrote last night to Lord Brougham, that I had not ventured to submit his letter upon the subject to His Majesty. The expression of his sentiments may appear strong, but yet it is not more so than his occasional remarks warranted; and I considered it my duty not to withhold it from the Lord Chancellor, that he might judge how far it would be advisable or useful to press the point further.

I have, &c. H. TAYLOR.

No. 469.

Sir H. Taylor to Earl Grey.

(Private.) Windsor Castle, June 7, 1832.

My dear Lord,—I did not attend the King to St. James's yesterday, but your Lordship's letter was brought to His Majesty, who opened it, and on his return he ordered me to assure you of the concern with which he learnt that you continued so much indisposed, and to express his sincere hope that he may very shortly receive a more satisfactory account of you. I trust I need not add, that I shall rejoice to be the bearer of such to His Majesty.

The Lord Chancellor transmitted this morning the Commission for giving the Royal Assent to the Reform Bill with a letter to me, in which he again urged His Majesty's giving it in person, and I took this opportunity of submitting to him His Lordship's previous letter also. But His Majesty persisted in his refusal.

* * * * *

I have, &c. H. Taylor.

No. 470.

Earl Grey to Sir H. Taylor.

(Private.) East Sheen, June 8, 1832.

My dear Sir Herbert,—I have just received your letter of yesterday, and beg you will express to His Majesty, with my humble duty, how sensible I am of the kind and condescending interest he is pleased to take about me.

I am much better, but far from well, and I am afraid I must look to a repetition of attacks similar to those which were brought on in 1807 by the fatigue of the House of Commons, and which tormented me for eighteen years, but had ceased since 1825. I have now four days of quiet before me, and I hope I shall recruit enough to get through the remainder of the Session.

I went yesterday to the House of Lords to act in the commission for passing the Bill, and came here immediately afterwards. I did not know that the Chancellor had written again on the subject of the King's attendance, and was not surprised at the result, though I could have wished it otherwise. Being apprised, however, of the strength of His Majesty's feelings on this subject, I forbore pressing what appeared to be so repugnant to them.

* * * * *

I remain, &c. GREY.

No. 471.

The King to Earl Grey.

Windsor Castle, June 18, 1832.

The King received yesterday afternoon a letter from the Duke of Cumberland, which, considering the warmth with which he usually enters into these subjects, and the immediate occasion of his communication, appears to His Majesty so moderate and reasonable that he cannot hesitate in transmitting it to Earl Grey.

His Majesty has read 'the Address of the Council of the Birmingham Political Union to all their Fellow-countrymen in the United Kingdom;' and he freely owns to Earl Grey, that he views it in the same light that the Duke of Cumberland does, and that he concurs in opinion with him and with many others, that, if those Political Unions be not put down speedily, 'they will destroy all government.'

Indeed His Majesty considers their existence to be incompatible with the existence of any other authority, persuaded as he is that, with the powerful aid of a press which is admitted to be uncontrollable, the Political Unions will exercise a power with which the King and the Government will in vain endeavour to contend. It has been stated, indeed, that they would put themselves down, that they have been in general formed in aid of the measure of Parliamentary Reform, and that the resistance opposed to that measure by those who differed in opinion as to its expediency or extent, had greatly increased those Political Unions, which might be expected to dissolve themselves as the excitement which had produced them should subside.

This, however, remains to be proved, and the language held in the address enclosed, and that held at other meetings of Political Unions, does not tend to confirm that expectation; on the contrary, it would seem that those associations are to be maintained for ulterior objects, for purposes avowedly fraught with embarrassment to the Government, and with a determination to control its measures. Allowing even that these *imperious* associations shall condescend to dissolve themselves, this act would afford no security, as there would be nothing to prevent their re-forming themselves the very next day, and their pursuing the same obnoxious course.

With these impressions the King cannot but earnestly press upon Earl Grey and his other confidential servants, the danger which they incur by tolerating the existence of such an engine of destruction.

WILLIAM R.

(Enclosure.)

The Duke of Cumberland to the King.

Kew, June 16, 1832.

Dear Brother,—We had last night a short discussion in the House of Lords, calling upon Ministers to know, whether they meant to take any measures to put down the Political Unions, having previously produced to the House various speeches held at these meetings and publications, all since the passing of the English Reform Bill.

Lord Grey replied that, 'much as he disapproved of these Political Unions, that he had no intention whatever of proposing any stronger measure to put them down, than those which the law *actually now* possessed, in case they acted against the law; that he trusted to the good sense of the people of England; and that, as the cause of their excitement was now done away with, they would dissolve themselves.'

Now, to show the fallacy of this doctrine, I beg leave to enclose to you a printed paper sent to me, as it has been to most of the anti-reform Peers, by this day's post from Birmingham, which clearly proves that they have not the *slightest* intention of dissolving themselves, but, on the contrary, of setting themselves up over every one and every body, and of being the sole dictators of who are to be the new candidates for the ensuing general election; and, in fact, making the next Parliament mere delegates. All those who are well versed in the law, as well as many of the great practical statesmen of the country, declared that the *Proclamation* issued last autumn against these societies, unless followed by other measures, would be totally fruitless; and this, I fear, we shall find too late for our salvation.

Excuse my troubling you with this letter, but I really cannot conscientiously see all this go on without calling your attention to it, as I feel certain, if some measure is not resorted to to put an end to these Political Unions, *they will destroy all government.*

I send you merely this last paper, signed as you will see by Mr. Attwood, but there are many more, some speaking *plainer and stronger* language than this.

Believe me, &c. CUMBERLAND.

No. 472.

Earl Grey to The King.

Downing Street, June 19, 1832.

Earl Grey presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and has the honour of acknowledging your Majesty's letter of yesterday with the accompanying enclosures.

It cannot be necessary for Earl Grey to repeat to your Majesty his opinion as to the permanent establishment of such bodies as the Political Unions, nor of the unjustifiable character of much that has occurred, both in speaking and writing, in the course of their proceedings. These Unions, as your Majesty is aware, had their origin many months before your Majesty was pleased to call for the services of your present Ministers; and meetings had taken place, more especially in July and August, 1830, at which speeches, not less violent than any that have since appeared, had been made and published, yet nothing had been done to check their proceedings; nor did your Majesty's present servants, on their introduction into your Majesty's councils, find a single trace of any measure which had been in contemplation for such a purpose.

Earl Grey begs leave also to remind your Majesty, not only that associations of a similar description have existed in former times, which no law, when such an attempt has been made, has been found sufficient to prevent, but that, both before and contemporaneously with the formation of these Unions, other clubs and societies, the organisation of which would appear to be more inconsistent with the existing laws, had been established. Of this description are the Brunswick Clubs and Orange Lodges, institutions both in their character and their proceedings not less dangerous to the public peace, nor less injurious to the authority of the Government, than the Unions which the most active leaders in those societies are the most forward to denounce.

The substance of what Earl Grey said in the House of Lords, in answer to a question put to him by the Marquis of Londonderry, is correctly stated in the letter addressed to your Majesty by His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland. It is in truth no more than a simple expression of the opinion which Earl Grey has more than once stated to your Majesty with reference to this subject. He trusts and believes that, if not irritated by an injudicious interference, these Unions will die away; that many of them will be formally dissolved; that from others the most respectable persons, who had but lately been induced to join them, will withdraw themselves; and, while this hope exists, nothing, as it appears to Earl Grey, could be more impolitic than to unite them all in a common cause by an attempt to suppress them.

But it is not only to the particular circumstances of the moment that this remark would apply. After long and careful consideration, Earl Grey has not been able to discover, by what means of coercion such Unions could be prevented. Experience, founded on the Acts passed during the administration of Mr. Pitt and subsequently, seems to justify this opinion. The very existence, notwithstanding the enactment of these laws, of the evil now complained of, shows how vain measures of this description have been.

How, indeed, could any act be framed which would prevent the circulation of such a handbill as that sent to your Majesty by the Duke of Cumberland? Suppress the Unions, if it be possible to do so; but would it be possible to prevent other meetings, under different names, using the same means for the accomplishment of the same purposes. It is the effect on the approaching elections which His Royal Highness seems chiefly to apprehend. But associations and committees for election purposes have been in constant practice, are contrary to no law, and are not inconsistent with the spirit of the Constitution. Without a violation of these principles, such associations and committees could not be prohibited; and from them, corresponding with each other and acting in concert, publications and addresses might issue, with a view to influence the constituent body in the choice of their representatives, and probably with increased effect from the very attempt that had been made to suppress them.

* * * * *

With respect to the reference made by the Duke of Cumberland to the Proclamation issued towards the close of the last year, it cannot be necessary to remind your Majesty, that it was directed against an attempt to convert the Unions into armed and disciplined bodies, under the pretext of preserving the public peace. This was undoubtedly illegal; it was acknowledged to be so; the plan was abandoned; and the object of the Proclamation having been thus accomplished, nothing further was required with a view to the purpose for which it had been issued.

Upon the whole, Earl Grey feels it to be his duty, even before he submits the communication made to him by your Majesty to his colleagues, humbly but explicitly to repeat to your Majesty his unchanged and conscientious opinion, that nothing could be more injurious to your Majesty's service, nothing more dangerous to the public peace and security of the empire, under the present circumstances of the country, than any attempt, by new and coercive enactments, to suppress institutions which are not prohibited by any existing law, and which, if they should transgress the bounds of duty prescribed to all loyal subjects, he confidently trusts the authority and the power of the Government will be found sufficient to restrain.

All which, &c. GREY.

No. 473.

The King to Earl Grey.

Windsor Castle, June 20, 1832.

The King acknowledges the receipt of Earl Grey's letter of yesterday, conveying his observations upon the Political Unions, and upon the policy and expediency of resorting to legislative measures towards checking those associations, in consequence of His Majesty's communication of a letter addressed to him by the Duke of Cumberland and its enclosure.

The King has read Earl Grey's letter with great attention, and His Majesty admits the good sense and the validity of his reasoning against any attempt, under the present circumstances of the country, by new and coercive enactments, to suppress institutions which are not prohibited by any existing law, provided the authority and the power of the Government shall be found sufficient to restrain those which should transgress the bounds of duty prescribed to all loyal subjects. His Majesty cannot, however, but lament the non-existence of any law applicable to the establishment of associations, of the danger of which to all government he retains his opinion; and he cannot disguise from Earl Grey his further opinion, that the Political Unions have, in many instances, transgressed the bounds of duty prescribed to *loyal subjects*, and that communications have been established between them for general purposes hostile to the established authorities, which may be considered at variance with the law applicable to Corresponding Societies.

His Majesty is quite convinced that Earl Grey's general sentiments upon this subject are, from principle, and from a sense of the embarrassment which the Government of which he is the head, or any Government, must experience, from the existence of such a clog upon its measures as are these Political Unions, in strict accordance with the sentiments entertained and expressed by His Majesty, although they may differ in their expectations of these Unions dissolving themselves, or at least of their dissolving themselves, without the determination of re-forming themselves for *ulterior objects*, whenever it should suit their purpose or their fancy.

His Majesty is, therefore, satisfied that Earl Grey and his responsible colleagues will keep a watchful eye upon these Political Unions, and the proceedings of any agitators who may be members of them; and that they will not omit any future opportunity of applying to them the restraining authority of the Government, if they should be found to transgress the bounds of duty prescribed to loyal subjects.

William R.

THE END.

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